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**THE INTERMEDIATE STATE**  
**AND**  
**OTHER DISCOURSES.**

1

# THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

AND OTHER DISCOURSES.

BY

JAMES STRATTEN,

FORTY-TWO YEARS MINISTER OF PADDINGTON CHAPEL.



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1867.

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## DEDICATION.

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I DEDICATE THESE PAGES  
TO THE MEMORY OF THE MANY FRIENDS AND KINDRED,  
WHO, IN FORMER YEARS,  
AS WELL AS IN MORE RECENT TIMES, HAVE PASSED AWAY,  
IN THE FULL EXPECTATION THAT I SHALL  
SOON MEET THEM AGAIN  
IN THE MUTUAL CONGRATULATIONS OF  
HEAVEN AND ETERNITY.



## P R E F A

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THE following discourse on  
was delivered many years  
assembly of ministers who  
tion at the time. The late  
very earnest in solicitation  
fully and at his leisure to  
which had greatly interested  
to shed light on some very  
Scripture.

From an unwise and shrink  
the press, from a desire to  
controversial points, in an  
more from the pressure, and  
of a very large and intelligent  
not comply with the wishes

that a period of seclusion from public work has been assigned to me by Divine Providence, I have reviewed the discourse, and, as I think that the argument has very considerable force, even if it does not amount to actual demonstration, I offer it to the consideration of those who feel interested in the subject discussed, as coming from one who is about to enter the world of spirits of which it treats.

65, HAMILTON TERRACE,

ST. JOHN'S WOOD, JAN., 1867.



## CONTENTS

---

### I.

THE INTERMEDIATE STATE. Heb.

### II.

ENTRANCE TO THE HOLIEST BY THE  
Heb. x, 19. . . .

### III.

FAITH AND CONFESSION SECURE  
9, 10. . . .

### IV.

THE LOVE OF GOD MANIFESTED  
CHRIST. 1 John iv, 7—10

### V.

THE FULNESS OF THE GOSPEL BLISS

### VI.

THE DAY OF DEATH BETTER THAN  
Eccles. vii, 1. . . .



## THE INTERMEDIATE

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“To the spirits of just men

THE subject appointed to my lectures is the Intermediate which I have selected for a appropriate to the occasion ; ever, if I have rightly apprehended of discussion which the project subjects anticipated. Does it exist as it subsisted under the Old Testament, from the death of Adam upon the cross ? or as it subsists after the ascension of the Redeemer till of the resurrection of the just comprehend and embrace both involve the whole question in particulars ? I presume that the

pass in review and examination before us, and I shall endeavour to open it accordingly. I must also, on this occasion, bespeak your candour. Where the great and fundamental principles of the gospel are concerned, we are to be bold and uncompromising, and we are justified in assuming the attitude of confidence and certainty; we announce oracles which require and demand implicit reception and belief; and we bear decisive witness and testimony against an ungodly and gainsaying generation; but there are other opinions, among which I include certain branches of this argument, to be held with modesty and caution, in which liability to error, and the possibility of misconception and mistake, is freely to be admitted. I have endeavoured to grope my way into a dark and difficult field of investigation. Alas! the vanity and ignorance of man; the very best and brightest of us see but through a glass darkly.

“Poor wanderers of a stormy day,  
From wave to wave we’re driven,  
And fancy’s flash and reason’s ray,  
Serve but to light the troubled way;  
There’s nothing true but heaven.”

The text is a brief description of heaven. Heaven is the great object of our hope; heaven is to compensate for all trials, and counterbalance all present

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THE INTERMEDIAR

sorrows. On this great question of religion and Christianity, let us see what we can learn from the excellent Quarles,

“O that thou wouldst grant thy life  
That's not light alone, but life,  
all in one.”

It may fairly be supposed that the light of divine knowledge yet lies hidden beneath the surface of the Scriptures, and that the imperfection and incoherency of human language in accordance with divine things are to be recognised, and when whatever is revealed either explicitly affirm, or implicitly deny, is received and embraced with confidence, we may then hope that the light of the prospect of the hidden and the vastness of the enlarged. In this simple principle, and deriving every principle, and induction, from the sacred Scriptures, we proceed to an examination of the simple and comprehensive doctrine, and men made perfect.”

God is a Spirit; infinite, unchangeable, they who worship Him accept Him in spirit and in truth, and go from thy spirit? or whither thy presence?” God is a S

underived. All other spirit is of and from Him ; He is never said to be the Father of our bodies, but the Father of our spirits. He is the Father of all spirits ; all spirits are derived from Him ; on Him they depend ; in Him they live, and move, and have their being ; God emphatically says, " All souls are mine."

Angels are spirits, " He maketh his angels spirits, and his messengers a flame of fire." They are radiant, luminous, incorruptible, not flesh and blood, not embodied. They pass to and fro, they go up and down from heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, like flashes of lightning ; they are quick as thought ; there is no materiality ; there is no hindrance nor obstruction to activity and service ; they pass through all the forms of matter as light through crystal, or transparent ether.

" Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth  
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep,  
All these with ceaseless praise His works behold  
Both day and night."

There is a vast spiritual system and economy to which the material and elemental is secondary and subordinate.

But the passage which we aim to interpret, speaks of the spirits of men, spirits once in this world, once in bodies as we are now :—

“Once they were mourning here below,  
And wet their couch with tears,  
They wrestled hard as we do now,  
With sins, and doubts, and fears.”

Now they are the spirits of just men made perfect.

In relation to human spirits generally we propose,

- I. To open and explain the principles respecting the future life, upon which we proceed in this discussion.
- II. To examine the doctrine of Scripture respecting the intermediate state, anterior to our Saviour's ascension.
- III. To exhibit the evidence and proof of the life and happiness of His people with Him in glory subsequently to that great event.
- IV. To state the practical issue and efficacy of the whole argument.

I. To open and explain the doctrine of the future life.

FIRST. Our FIRST PRINCIPLE is, that the human mind is an original, immaterial essence, altogether distinct from, and independent of, any material substance or bodily organization. We infer this from the account given in Scripture of the creation of man; Gen. ii, 7: “And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the *ground*, and breathed into his nostrils

the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The body was exquisitely and perfectly formed in all its internal and still imperfectly understood mechanism, in all its outward symmetry and loveliness; but the nostrils were without breath, and the countenance without animation; it lay like lifeless alabaster on the earth, or like the body of Jesus in the tomb. The vital and intellectual principle was then imparted, and the first man arose to all the freshness and felicity of life and thought and reason, and looked around upon his fair heritage, and worshipped his Creator. This account sheds ample light on the essential distinction between the body and the soul; the one being compounded of elemental matter, the other of direct divine origination, a celestial essence emanating immediately from God; and it is reasonable to infer that the same distinction and the same principles obtain to this day; there is still a spirit in man which merely inhabits the animal and material structure, and "the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding."

Again, the powers, passions, and faculties of the soul, in their own nature and operations, sufficiently evince its immateriality. We are acquainted with the qualities and properties of matter, and they are easily described, notwithstanding all which Dr. Priestly has written to the contrary. To matter



## THE INTERMEDIATE S

belong solidity, size, shape, colour, bility, density, or attenuation. But substance ever think, reason, argue, imagine, love, or hate? are conscious, reason, and thought, in any way possible. Can they be of the same nature as fluids, muscles, blood, and bones in a state ever so gross, or ever so refined, it is inert, unthinking matter. The faculties of the mind inhere in matter and are of the same substance with the visible, they must have shape, divisibility. Are then the powers to be dissevered and dismembered like a body? It appears to me that our consciousness is sufficient proof that the mind is an abstract and mysterious faculties, not visible, and uncompounded agent, that nothing can be more unphilosophical to ascribe thought, reason, conscience, the past, anticipation of the future in any conceivable state, either of organization. For either the mind exists in every atom, or it must be in union and aggregation. Can then it be more absurd than the idea of thinking up and down the immensity of space.

single atom have not the thinking faculty they may aggregate by myriads, and mind and conscience, reason and judgment, still be wanting. The whole case is clear and easy if we admit the principle of a separate and independent essence, to which the known and defined properties of mind belong, in which all the faculties and powers and passions inhere and abide.

This principle, therefore, we adopt, and regard mind as altogether separate and distinct in its own nature and being from any materialism in which it may happen to be invested. It may be added, also, that all the elements of thought, the subjects with which the mind is conversant and familiar, partake of its own abstract and immaterial qualities. All the truth and certainty of the processes of figures, all the demonstrations of mathematics, all metaphysical argument, all the revelations of theology, all the forms of logic, and all the investigations of moral and intellectual philosophy, are pure from all the grossness and free from all the adhesions of materiality. They are abstract and intangible in their own nature; they are not palpable to any of the senses, they can neither be seen, nor heard, nor felt; there is no touch nor trace of materialism upon them, yet are they in their own nature most radiant, illuminated, and ethereal. There is a most delightful

congeniality and adaptation between their properties and the mind which expatiates and triumphs in the midst of them. And it may well excite our astonishment, and kindle our ecstasy, as we come to understand that deep, profound, and most glorious discoveries are to be made, within and beyond, and independent of, the physical substances of the creation ; that there are fair and ample fields of knowledge and intelligence, irrespective of all material objects ; that we may close our eyes upon all visible loveliness, only to open them upon the surpassing and imperishable beauties of the invisible world ; and that there are regions of intellect, thought, and glory, free from all the feculence and contamination, the commotion and change of the material universe. Alas ! for the narrowness and contraction of our most enlarged ideas ; yet what powerful and entrancing glimpses we obtain at times, of the ineffable light and splendour which await our being in the future stages of its interminable progression. If any additional confirmation of this doctrine were required, it would be found in the weakness and self-contradiction of the arguments which are brought to oppose it. I have repeatedly observed that materialists find it impossible to express themselves without strongly admitting the very principle which they are attempting to over-

throw, and that the very language of the reasoning against the immateriality of the soul, in almost every instance, decisively shows that mind is not body, and that body is not mind.

It will be shown in its proper place, that this distinction of essential principles in our compounded nature, is unequivocally recognized and taught by the prophets of the old dispensation, by the Lord of all the prophets, when He was manifested in the flesh, and by the apostles who wrote and spoke as they were moved and inspired by the Holy Ghost.

SECOND. Our SECOND PRINCIPLE is, that the body is only the instrument which the mind employs, commanding and controlling it at its pleasure. All the limbs and senses are in complete subjection to the mind. At the will, and by the authority of the immaterial principle, all the actions of the body are performed, as by the passive servant of the inward and presiding power. This part of the argument is opened with incomparable clearness and force by Bishop Butler, and there is little to be added to what he has written, "Analogy," page 26 :—"Our body is made up of organs and instruments of perception and motion. Thus, the common optical experiments show how sight is assisted by glasses, and that we see with our eyes in the same sense as we see with

glasses. Nor is there any reason to believe that we see with them in any other sense, any other I mean, which would lead us to conclude the eye itself a percipient. The like is to be said of hearing, and our feeling distant solid matter by means of somewhat in our hand, is an instance of the like kind. These are cases of foreign matter, or such as is no part of our body, being instrumental in preparing objects for, and conveying them to, the perceiving power, in a manner similar to that in which our organs of sense prepare and convey them. And if we see with our eyes only in the same manner as we see with glasses, the like may justly be concluded, from analogy, of all our other senses. So also of our power of moving; upon the destruction of a limb, this active power remains unlesened, so that the living being who has suffered the loss, would be as capable of moving as before if he had another limb. He can walk by the help of an artificial leg, just as he can make use of a pole or a lever to reach towards himself things beyond the length and power of his natural arm. And this last it does in the same manner as it reaches and moves, with the natural arm, things nearer and of less weight. Nor is there any ground to think that his eyes are the seers, or his feet and hands the movers in any other sense than the microscope and

the staff are. Upon the whole then, our organs of sense and our limbs are certainly instruments which the living persons themselves make use of to perceive and move with."

This argument appears to be incontestable, and here is a complete answer to the reasoning which infers the materiality of the soul, from the fact that its operations are impeded or assisted by the condition of the body. Clearly as the instrument is more perfect, the agent can employ it with the more facility and effect; and *vice versa*, as it is impaired and injured, all the operations become more difficult and imperfect; but this affects not in the slightest degree the essential distinction between the agent and the instrument; yet on this fact, materialists mainly rest their cause, and unsuccessfully attempt to show that because body and mind reciprocally affect each other, they are one and the same substance. It may be observed also, that the operations of mind, and the highest activity of thought, are in some cases entirely independent of all the senses of the body. "I have lost my sight," said a man of God, "but my inward sight is surprisingly improved thereby."

Deafness has no effect on the intellect; smelling, taste, feeling, might in like manner be suspended or even destroyed, and the thinking principle remain in its entireness, its independence, its strength, and

even its glory. And it is delightful to contemplate the mind in its supremacy and dominion, issuing its mandates and exercising its authority over a passive, powerless, unintelligent system of organized matter, with which it happens to be in contact, and to which at present it sustains a near relation, while the two natures remain perfectly distinct and dissimilar; the body sustained by food and drink and raiment, and the mind nourished and replenished by truth, and holiness, and joy.

THIRD. Our THIRD PRINCIPLE is, that the mind is capable of a distinct and separate life, when all the material organization has fallen off, and vanished away from it. It may assist us in arriving at this conclusion, to consider that in the highest and most vigorous efforts of the mind, all concurrence and co-operation of the senses of the body are excluded. In our abstract reasonings, speculations and reveries, we are accustomed to close the eyes, to retire into silence, as much as may be to shut out all sights and all sounds, that the mind may enjoy and exercise its faculties independently and alone. It is found that the functions of the body are hindrances and impediments to pure thought, to the free, triumphant excursions of an unclouded and unfettered intellect. Every thing which belongs to the body, is unheeded and

forgotten ; its sensations and materialism are overborne, it is for a time as if it were not, and the mind rejoices in its own abstractions, soars and expatiates in illuminated regions of its own, kindles in felicities with which the body has no more sympathy than the chair on which one sits, or the unconscious pen which marks down in mystic ciphers the thoughts and theories in which the speculation begins, proceeds, and terminates. Now, if while in the body, the efforts of the mind are independent, and without even the sympathy of the body ; why may it not exist in the power and purity of its own ethereal essence, in the depth and clearness and plentitude of ineffable intuitions, in all the beauty and richness of seraphic genius and ardour, when the body is no more ? This is confirmed and illustrated further, by our experience in the hours of sleep. When the body is enjoying its repose, and resting to receive its mysterious and inscrutable invigoration, the mind is often awake in the highest vivacity of its operations, and creating scenes of terror or blessedness.

And as if to show that the unintelligent elemental materials around us are hindrances and not helps to the intellectual faculties ; when the arm, the eye, the ear, and the foot, have suspended the functions even of their instrumentality ; then what will not the mind achieve and accomplish. Persons who, when awake,



## THE INTERMEDIAT

were never poets, have in sleep has been flowing from them in numbers ; others, who were in dreams supposed that they were and learned books ; all time as if annihilated, the imagination full splendour and enchantment like the Babylonish monarch, call the lustre and sweetness, to many of our dreams. Who have either in the illusions of childlike tions that the reins have some night season ; while prophets ( have been even favoured by Almighty. How reasonable that the union shall be dissolved and deeper sleep is appointed may be at large and in all the blessedness of its own pure and operations.

It should also be observed that much of what is called death, have a deeper and fuller knowledge really have. For when you see do you see ? The outward and of dissolution, and that is all ; confusedly, imperfectly, and in

causes at work, and principles in action, and essences in conflict, altogether impalpable to our senses. They are too subtle, and abstract, for our penetration. The eye, exquisite and complicated as is its mechanism, is too coarse an organ for the inspection of all the processes of this great change. We magnify exceedingly the powers of vision beyond their real virtue ; for we never see more than the surfaces of things, nor even these without light ; and incredible and most glorious transactions may be taking place around us, of which we have no perception, as the prophet's servant found when a glance was permitted him into the invisible world, and the horses and the chariots of fire flashing to and fro, were seen around his master, Elisha. And so it is a mere gratuitous assumption, for which there is no proof whatever, that when the body dies and is decomposed, the soul also sleeps or perishes in the material ruin. It is, surely, far more natural and philosophical to suppose, that the independent essence survives and emerges in its own life and glory. And without possibility of contradiction it must be admitted, upon any principle, even that of atheism itself, that our life in another world in purity and perfect joy, is not half as incredible as our existence here, in the midst of the war of elements, and all the moral confusion and anarchy which prevail everywhere around us. We

## THE INTERME

conclude, therefore, not on the body, and is capable of a more exalted life, but that it is unequal to a higher condition, satisfied with its present intellectual felicities. Like a light and obscuring lantern,—the example, in the earthen pit, where the lights appear in all the brightness of their illumination, and are seen far abroad; or like an artist's tent, where all is contracted, and he goes forth and tries his strength in the open, he will bound like Asahel, from the valleys of the land of Canaan, emerging from its shell to a more extended sphere, to shake its glistening plumage in the unbounded flight, in the unbounded heaven. There are then spirit and intellect. The only reply attempted. The only line of argument is, that the same arguments equally prove the immortality of the soul. But it is answered, that even if the appeal is only to our imagination, the maxim of Paley is here in full force: never to relinquish what we have, for the sake of difficulties arising out of our ignorance. Besides, the cases are totally

important particulars. With certain most insignificant exceptions, no animal ever subjugates another to its service and control, so as to employ the creatures of another species for the execution of its purposes; but the most ignorant of the human species does subdue the most powerful of the brutes, and brings them into complete subjection. There is no principle of improvement in the animal tribes; they are now exactly as they were in all past ages: in man this principle of progression exists, and is without limit. It is not even pretended in the one case that there is any moral accountability; whereas in the other this is a most prominent and characteristic attribute. There is no anticipation of future life, no aspiration after it; whereas in man the one is clear, the other intense. We acquiesce in the verdict of Scripture, "The spirit of man goeth upward, and returns to God; the spirit of the beast goeth downward," and is extinct for ever. We conclude, therefore, that there are spirits which were once embodied, but now, having been disembodied, are the spirits of just men made perfect.

FOURTH. Our FOURTH PRINCIPLE is, that the doctrine of purgatorial purification, as taught and defended by the Romish Church, is a delusion and a fiction. It is believed, or professedly believed, that in some dark and dismal subterranean region, a vast

fire is enkindled, that disembodied souls are conducted thither, that they there pass through a process of moral purgation and refinement, which is either shorter or longer, according to the number and nature of their sins. It would be a sufficient answer to this to say, that there is no intimation of such a doctrine in Holy Scripture ; that it involves a direct denial of the satisfaction of the Son of God to divine and infinite justice by His sacrificial death ; and would, if true, obliterate and expunge that most august and consolatory proposition, "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin." On the contrary, we receive, upon believing, the "white stone" of plenary absolution ; and the forgiveness is repeated and renewed day by day, and night by night, as we are conscious of our need of it, and apply to Christ for it, until at last we pass into eternity unintimidated, unaccused, unblamable, triumphant, through the propitiation and righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

It is especially necessary to introduce this topic, because some distinguished materialists have contended that the doctrine of the sleep, by which they mean the temporary extinction of the soul till the morning of the resurrection, is the true and ancient doctrine of the Christian Church ; that the dogma of the intermediate state was invented to give coun-

tenance to the theory of the Papal purgatory, and that the two principles have a close and indissoluble alliance, and stand or fall together. It is indeed true, that if this doctrine of the separate and independent life were overturned, that of purgatory would be annihilated also, for there can be no torment of souls, if there are no souls to be tormented ; but, if there are regions of blessedness and misery revealed to us in the Bible, irrespective of the illusive fictions of the Papal Church ; and if the doctrine of the independent and disembodied life therein can be established on the authority of Holy Scripture, it will abide in its own glory, importance, and solemnity ; and the conclusion will be inevitable, that there are spirits of just men in security and happiness ; and there are spirits of wicked men in prison, until the judgment of the great day.

It appears certain, that no argument can be derived from revelation, which would induce us to believe that any probationary discipline is exercised, or any moral change effected in the future state. In this world we receive the principles, and perform the actions, which will stamp our being and character for eternity. Either the lovely image of God is restored upon us, and made to shine in its fairness and beauty ; or the dark and odious image of sin and Satan, and the fallen Adam, abides irreversibly and

## THE INTERMEDL

for ever. At the day of uni  
one will receive according to  
*body*: which expression is in  
opposition to what is done in  
the disembodied state. At de  
place, and the reward or pun  
is to remain unaltered in its  
for ever. As the tree falls so wi  
and appalling sentence will  
case, "He that is unjust, let h  
that is filthy, let him be filthy  
and triumphant verdict will  
case, "He that is righteous, let  
he that is holy, let him be ho  
eternity.

Whatever changes may tra  
places of abode of the right  
the manner of administering  
divine kingdom, posterior to  
the Supreme Judge, there v  
every individual soul, an eve  
the selfsame course, and on t  
in which it begins at the poi  
departure from our world.  
Scripture has described unde  
of the undying worm, and th  
there is reason to apprehe

from one state of malignity, and wickedness, and exasperation, to another, the fresh sins thus committed, and the fresh guilt thus incurred *there*, involving not endless only, but ever increasing punishment. How awful and intimidating the prospect! In the case of those who shall appear before the throne of the Father and of the Lamb in the light and blessedness of the celestial world, the holiness developed, and the new services ever rendered *there* will involve progress from knowledge to knowledge, from illumination to illumination, from joy to joy, from jubilee to jubilee, from glory to glory, through the cycle of everlasting ages. How awakening, and thrilling, and overwhelming, is this conviction!

Hence the unspeakable importance of the transient days now passing over us. As our moral and spiritual condition now is, so will it abide; if dark and unregenerate, we pass on to the darkness and alienation of the last prison; if enlightened and restored, we emerge to the uncreated radiance, and inconceivable felicity, and everlasting fruitions of the home and dwelling-place of God. What an argument to our fears. Fear Him who can cast soul and body into hell. What life, and kindling, and inspiration to our hopes, for the momentary lightness of our present affliction worketh for us a far more exceeding, even an eternal weight of glory, καθ' υπερβολην, εις



## THE INTERMEDL

*υπερβολην*, for there is no translation is that we go on from that expression and exceeds though passes and exceeds incomparably

FIFTH. Our FIFTH PRINCIPLE is of just, that is of justified people to the heavenly mansions. This is chiefly in relation to the argument; the question propounded is, "How shall man be justified?" The Scriptures furnish a full answer. Take Abel as an example of the antediluvian age, "By faith Abel offered a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, and obtained witness that he was righteous, in faith offering of his gifts: and by which he became dead, and yet speaketh." We read in Genesis of the firstlings of his flock, and respect to Abel, and to his faith in the blood of the sacrifice, the sacrifice he obtained reward, favour, acceptance, and justification from God; he was in himself a righteous man. Cain, with all his unbelieving principles, and his resentful, unhappy, and malevolent

was full of faith, adorned with amiable tempers, and benevolent affections, yet his confidence and comfort were not in these, but in the favour of God through the victim and the altar. Abel became the spirit of a just man received into glory. We cannot but fear that Cain became the spirit of a lost man, a spirit in perdition; the one the spirit of a justified man, the other the spirit of a man unjustified, and left to all the consequences of his infidelity and wickedness. The condition of a just man involves, therefore, two principles; first, the reception of the justifying grace of God through Christ by faith, and then, the moral effect on the heart and life. Gratuitous justification by faith in Christ is the root of holiness. On this stem holiness blooms and blossoms in all its loveliness. The consciousness of justification by faith in Christ is a fountain of purity, out of which gush streams of moral excellence, which often fructify and fertilize the regions around.

Take Abraham as an example and specimen of the patriarchal age; Abraham believed God, and He counted it to him for righteousness. Abraham was a just and justified man, the justification was by faith in Christ, Christ to come, antecedent to circumcision, and without works; and notwithstanding all his sins and idolatries in Ur of the Chaldees; the justification was by faith in the

## THE INTERMEDIATE

anticipated sacrifice and substituted the obedience of Abraham was of that truth in his heart and in the case of Abel, is a just sight of God, in the righteous salvation of Christ; justified by the purity and excellence of so he became one of the most spirits of just men made perfect princes of God in glory. Multi east and the west, the north a down with Abraham in the heaven the same principles.

Let us think of Moses under establish the altar, and all the connection with it? did he not construct the mercy seat? did order, enter into the holiest, and blood? did he not commune over the propitiatory? is not the interpretation of the apostle Paul epistle to the Romans, "Him who be a propitiation through faith in died in the wilderness expressly made nothing perfect; that there its works; and so one thousand afterwards Moses appears on the

figuration, and talked with Christ of the decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. Moses, as well as Abel and Abraham, was justified by faith in Christ who was to come.

Take David among the kings; according to St. Paul, David describes the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works; and of the prophets, one and all, the apostle Peter says, "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you; searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." So that each prophet and every righteous man was justified as a believer in Christ, and a partaker of His merits, and justified before man in the excellence and integrity of his own character and actions, as the fruit and effect of that antecedent justification before God.

Zacharias and Elizabeth also, the father and mother of John the Baptist, were just persons, but Zacharias was ministering at the altar when the angel came unto him. He was justified by faith in the principles which the altar and the service symbolized, and then just, as he walked in the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blamelessly, he was clothed in

## THE INTERMEDIATE

justification by faith in the  
about to commence, as in a gar-  
ness, and then he walked in his  
pathway of peace and safety,  
up, and where no ravenous beasts  
apostles, and all who hold the same  
one voice affirm, "Be it known  
this man is preached the forgiveness  
justification, from all things  
not be justified by the law of Moses  
to the Hebrews we read, "If thou  
of goats, and the ashes of an  
unclean, sanctifieth to the purification  
much more shall the blood of Christ  
eternal Spirit offered himself  
purify your conscience from dead  
living God?" In the epistle to  
"By the deeds of the law shall  
... but now the righteousness  
law is manifested, being witnessed  
the prophets, even the righteousness  
is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto  
them that believe." All men  
and exemplify the moral power  
just men. The text speaks of  
make perfect; they have been  
made them white in the blood

have followed holiness, and so see the Lord ; they are made perfect in knowledge, in wisdom, in purity, in love, and joy. The vast congregation and assembly of them are brought together from all ages and generations, and from almost all the countries of the world, and in their splendour and glory they celebrate the high perfections of the Father and the Lamb to all eternity. From the text, and other scriptures, I infer that all the capacities of the disembodied spirits will be developed and perfected ; and the more perfect the sight is, the more delightful are the beauties looked upon ; the more musical the ear, the more pleasant is the melody ; the more perfect the spirit, the more joyous will be the heavenly joys, and the more glorious the celestial glories.

From this view of the subject it appears that the faith and holiness of the gospel, on the one hand, entitle to, and qualify for the abode of blessedness—unbelief and disobedience on the other, render punishment and perdition indispensable and inevitable—Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and we conclude that as we exercise faith in His finished work, we receive triumphant and unimpeachable justification. All the demands of law and justice are fully answered, and our title to a glorified immortality is clear and indisputable. This is the argument of the apostle Paul, “ Much

more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life." It is not simple life, but the freedom, dominion, vigour, royalty of life, by One Jesus Christ. Faith in Christ worketh by love, and purifies the heart. It is vital and effectual by divine power and grace, and thus the disposition is renewed, and a moral condition is brought to pass, which qualifies for the society and occupations of the skies: Col. i, 12, 13, "Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." The rejection of Christ and His work, leaves the rejector under the curse and condemnation of the law, exposed to all the righteous severity of its tremendous sentence. Unbelief is identical with unrighteousness, and so, neither by principles, nor dispositions, nor mental habits, is there any fitness for the society of the spirits of just men made perfect; and of course exclusion from the presence of the divine glory, and the songs of the redeemed, is inevitable. Thus the equity of God as the moral ruler of the universe, and the grace of God as the Saviour of the Church, is abundantly revealed in the administration of the rewards and punishments of the intermediate state, as well as in the final and irreversible adjudi-

cations of the last day. You are now a human creature in flesh and blood. You are in the body. Are you justified or unjustified? are you righteous or unrighteous? For such as you are in the body you will be when out of the body, and when you enter the world of spirits. O, examine yourselves, and inquire, "Am I in the right condition, or the wrong? Am I on the way to the fellowship of the righteous, or the communion of the lost?" If wrong, if altogether wrong, the remedy is now available; "Now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation." "Christ died, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God." Now pass out of one condition into the other. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth in him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life." If in the right condition, abide and rejoice in it, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: by whom also we have access into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." You shall enter into the society of the spirits of the just, and be one of them. O, to be among them, beautiful in the midst of beauty, pure in the midst of purity, perfect in the midst of perfection, blessed in the



midst of blessedness for ever! If righteous, you shall be glorified at the final day. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth, who is he that shall condemn? and whom he justified them he also glorified." Only the justified spirits are admitted to the heavenly mansions.

These are the great principles upon which we proceed in this discussion; in them the light of reason and revelation are beautifully blended, and so far we are prepared to vindicate and hold fast every doctrine if there were occasion even to prison and to death.

II. Let us proceed to examine the doctrine of Scripture respecting the state of the spirits of just men, anterior to our Saviour's ascension.

Our enquiry now relates to the condition of the saved and the lost under the Old Testament economy, from the death of Abel and the time of Adam, to the hour when Christ ascended, and entered on His glory, and assumed His authority in heaven. The common belief of the Hebrew people, respecting the state of the dead, was, that they entered into some great receptacle of souls, which consisted of two departments or divisions, separated by an impassable gulph or lake; on the one side the righteous rested

and reigned in calmness and felicity, on the other side the wicked inhabitants walked and wandered in perpetual wretchedness, remorse, and suffering; the one was Gehenna, the other Paradise. There was one common entrance to this *receptaculum*. It was huge, and dark, and awful, and was called "the gates of death;" from it there was a passage to the right hand and to the left. To this place the living spirits of dead men were brought, and according to their character was their destination to Gehenna or Paradise, in these mysterious and inscrutable mansions. You are aware that long and elaborate discourses have been written by wise and learned men in favour of this opinion, and it comes recommended to our attention by a list of eminent names, both amongst ancient and modern theologians. After examining the subject with much impartiality and attention, I have arrived at some conclusions which are satisfactory to my own mind. It appears to me that the advocates of this opinion can prove the existence of some such state up to the period of our Saviour's ascension, but that in attempting to prolong it beyond that time, they have encountered a most successful opposition and suffered a complete discomfiture.

On the other hand, those who contend that believers were admitted to the full splendour of the beatific

## THE INTERMEDIATE STA

vision, anterior to the incarnation a Christ, seem to me entangled in inextricable difficulties. I have there a middle course, which admits the force of arguments of both parties up to a point, and affords a key for the solution of a problem, and opens a consistent and beautiful way to harmonize the statements of Scripture on this intricate question. The peculiarity of this may at once be considered sufficient for rejection by many persons; yet, it is that in revelation, as in nature, there are yet to be made, and obscurities to be solved, and problems to be solved, and difficulties to be cleared up. I shall just state the evidence which illustrates the opinion which has been given, and leave it to the candour of your presence to the investigation and research of your inquiries. I only premise, that it is a curious and unprofitable disquisition, whatever assists in the explanation of a text, throws a gleam of light, or a series of steps on a dark and obscure pathway, should be met with thankfulness by those who desire to follow the will of God, and to be wise up to the point of that which is written. I cannot but regret any grammatical criticism, although

to me that the critics have unanswerably proved that the Hebrew word "Sheol," in very many places in Holy Scripture, exactly corresponds to the idea of the intermediate state, as we have already described it. Gen. xxxvii, 35 : "Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth on his loins, and refused to be comforted, and said : I will go down into Sheol to my son mourning." Gen. xlii, 38 : "Ye will bring down my grey hairs with sorrow to Sheol ;" my body to the grave ; my soul to the mansions of the living spirits of dead men. If you examine all the passages in the Old Testament, in which the future state is referred to or described, you will find the ideas of repose, tranquillity, rest, for the righteous, but nothing more. There is frequently the phrase, "gathered to the fathers," to express departure from this world to another ; which, to say the least, agrees perfectly well with the theory of the intermediate state, which we are endeavouring to establish. The ninth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews shows, that the mystic rites of the Levitical sanctuary were intended to teach the doctrine of *final* felicity, in the place where the throne of God stands, and His special and supreme glory is displayed ; yet it is implied, that the period of admission thither was not then arrived ; for we read, the Holy Ghost thus signified, that the way into the holiest of all, that is, into the highest heaven, was

## THE INTERMED

not made manifest, while the standing, or the Levitical ecc the entrance of Abraham into and maker is God, and the a in the better, the heavenly sought, I take to mean their paradise, to the blessed division remained until the close of indicated by the rending Veil ; but into the highest admitted, until Christ with having completed the great entered as predecessor and first not entered into the holy place which are the figures of the ITSELF, now to appear in the The august and glorious temple are laid open, and are to the ascending spirits of the

My surprise and satisfaction finding, long after this theory was originated, and arranged the great authority of Dr. Owen that the fathers who died before had a nearer admission into upon the ascension of Christ before. They were in heaven

of God, but were not admitted within the veil, into the most holy place, where all the counsels of God in Christ are displayed and represented. There was no entrance before as to grace or glory within the veil, for, as I said, within the veil all the counsels of God in Christ laid open as they were typified in the holy place. This none could or were to behold before His own entrance thither."—*Owen on Hebrews*, vol. v., p. 311.

The passage we next notice is *Psa. lxxiii, 24*: "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." Admitting that this passage relates to the final vision and the supreme felicity of the consummation, it by no means invalidates other scriptures in which like doctrines are taught, not in contradiction, but in delightful harmony, opening a vast view of the economies of God, and the distributions of His universal kingdom. There was rest, and peace, and happiness in paradise, but not the final beatitude of the highest heaven.

It may be said that Enoch was translated, and Elijah was carried up to heaven in a chariot of fire; but these are two miraculous exceptions to all ordinary rules, yet they are not inconsistent with our theory, and we hold that both the translated persons were received into the repose, security, and joy of paradise, but not into the holiest of all. Such

## THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

a demonstration of the future life was requisite amid the atheism and wantonness of the antediluvian age ; it was also most requisite in the reign of the idolatrous and wicked kings of the Jewish monarchy ; but now that Christ is risen and Christianity fully opened, no such reality of the future life is required ; accordingly, no case of ascension is recorded in the completion of the New Testament.

So much to obviate objections.

The first direct and unequivocal promise of the future state in Scripture is in the affecting language of Job iii, 17 : “ I will cease from troubling ; and there shall I rest. There the prisoners rest together ; and the voice of the oppressor shall be heard. The strong shall be as the weak ; and the servant is free. I presume it will not be contended that there is any intimation in this passage beyond freedom, and repose. This was the patriarchal belief, but the view given of the future life is in contrast rather than comparison with the splendid representations of the heavenly state in the concluding chapters of the book.

I may refer to the remarkable vision of Eliphaz, Job iv, 12—18

was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. In thoughts from visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake. Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up: it stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image was before mine eyes, there was silence, and I heard a voice saying, Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker? Behold, he put no trust in his servants; and his angels he charged with folly." This passage seems to indicate the belief of Eliphaz, that the spirit he saw had once been an inhabitant of this world, where the wisdom and the rectitude of the Divine dispensations have been sometimes called in question; but having been admitted to the light of the spiritual world, he expresses his profound conviction of the absolute perfection of the ways of God, notwithstanding all their unsearchableness.

The next instance to be adduced is very singular and extraordinary. It occurs 1 Sam. xxviii, 11, 19: "Then said the woman, whom shall I bring up? and Saul said, bring me up Samuel. And when the woman saw Samuel, she cried with a loud voice." She was filled with consternation and alarm; something miraculous had occurred beyond the power



of her arts and incantations, and to the terror and intimidation of her own mind. After a severe and indignant rebuke, Samuel delivered a prophecy which received its exact accomplishment. "The Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hands of the Philistines; and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me." You perceive that we regard this account as a real transaction, in which Deity, by the prophet in his disembodied state, interposed. And how could the wicked soul of the slaughtered king be with the happy spirit of the departed prophet, except in the sense, and after the manner, which we have described? They were received into the separate divisions of the great receptacle of the living souls of all departed men. Samuel to the rest of paradise, Saul to the sufferings of gehenna. The saying of David at the decease of his child, is in close agreement with our principle: 2 Sam. xii, 23: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me;" both would meet in paradise. The sentence, Eccles. xii, 7., should be noticed: "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." This text is decisive in proof of the distinction between the soul and the body, and of the soul's separate and independent life and blessedness. It agrees exactly with the ideas of paradise, in which all good men

from the days of Abel to that day, were assembled ; enjoying the calm, clear sunlight of God's presence and God's love. To which may be added the beautiful verses, Isa. lvii, 2 : "He, [the righteous] shall enter into peace : they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."

In contrast with this is the awful and appalling record of the reception of the Babylonish monarch, by the great spirits of the lost, in the vast place of their imprisonment. The regions of the dead are laid open, there is great commotion among the inhabitants, the kings and captains arise to meet the proud potentate, not in the welcomes of peace and affection, but in indignant contempt and scorn, which show that there are no charities, no sympathies, no attempts at reciprocal mitigation of each other's woes among the lost, but on the contrary, that they exasperate and torment each other. The account is in Isa. xiv, 9—12 : "Sheol from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming : it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth ; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we ? Art thou become like unto us ? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols ; the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How

## THE INTERME

art thou fallen from heav  
morning! how art thou  
which didst weaken the na

There is also a most  
Ezek. xxxii. The multitu  
are represented as going  
weapons of war, having  
bones, and no longer the  
land of the living. There  
tion. Pharoah and his m  
company, Elam, Meshech  
cised, Edom and her king  
and all the Zidonians; w  
numerable aggregation!  
petent to imagine the ver  
which *they* will meet in a  
in the phrenzy and mad  
and destruction from th  
there must be, when the  
withdrawn, and the invisil  
and astonished minds.

But let us pass away  
and attend to the more cle  
of our blessed Lord Himse  
ment, in confirmation of o  
lessons and language of  
man spake. In the par

Lazarus our whole theory is found, in comprehensive and impressive exhibition. Lazarus is in one division of the intermediate state, in calm and tranquil felicity, reposing upon Abraham's bosom ; an impassable lake or gulf flows between them, and on the other side is the rich man with the companions of his punishment, lifting up his eyes in misery, asking for a drop of water to cool his tongue, and saying, "I am tormented in this flame." I am quite aware that this is only a parable, but the parables of our Lord had always true principles for their basis. The parable before us is not a mere fiction. There were at that time states of misery and of repose, answering to this description. I consider, therefore, that Christ Himself has given His sanction to the principle, and stamped it with the seal of His authority.

I am not ignorant that it has been said our Lord spoke in conformity to the notions and prejudices of the Jews of those times, and not as authenticating the existence of any such state Himself." Did He then countenance error ? Did He assist in promoting delusion ? Were His parables so constructed as to lead away from truth and not to illustrate, reveal, and establish the truth ? Away with such opinions respecting Him who knew all things ; who is the essential and everlasting Truth embodied, and the Faithful and True Witness.

## THE INTERMEDIATE

Again, until the incarnation of place, and the Lamb, the glorified Lord Jesus, was established on earth, was not prepared for the saints. that they should take possession of emphatically the Head and then entered. In truth, He was not the first myriads in long succession had passed a palpable misnomer, and should be out. In this case Christ would be but successor—not at the head, but not the first, but preceded by all believers. But who is prepared? And as heaven was not prepared for Christ, the Forerunner and High Priest, so it may be doubted if human nature for that vision of the essential beauty of Deity, which only was to be the great mystery of godliness had then become manifest in the flesh.

Admitting also that all the faithful in paradise, and not yet ascended to the full fruition of the beatific presence, and anxiety in looking forward to the ascent of the Redeemer, is abated for and explained, for it not only brings peace and happiness of their pos-

their own felicity also in the heaven and rest to which they had attained. If the price of their redemption was to be paid, and their exaltation to a higher state of blessedness and a nearer intimacy with God was to be secured when the work of Jesus was finished, we wonder not that Moses and Elias should come, commissioned by the whole expecting and exulting community of that preparatory state, to converse with Him at His transfiguration on His decease which He was to accomplish at Jerusalem. An ineffable lustre and interest is thus shed on that memorable occasion. We cannot conceive, perhaps it is not possible for us to know, what high and affecting communications they brought, or with what messages and announcements they were charged and entrusted as they returned to the mansions which were speedily and triumphantly to be evacuated for ever, in order to brighter joys and nearer access to the Eternal Majesty.

If our principle be admitted it also accounts for the full and unqualified declarations of the New Testament, as compared with the less distinct intimations of the Old. Now that Incarnate Deity reigns, now that our Prince and Saviour is exalted, the way is easy and the access open. The way into the holiest of all is now made manifest, and we pass through it with all possible confidence and joy, amid

## THE INTERMEDIATE

ample promises and abundant earth we have pure and luminous instead of obscure and mystic Jewish spirits of the redeemed instead of disconsolate and Abraham's bosom then Christ far above all heavens.

that the ascension of Christ affected only the living. It made the spirits of the just also increased the knowledge and felicity throughout the intelligible world. read, "To the intent that now unto the angels and powers in heavenly places, the church the manifold wisdom and privileges and blessedness of the saints be enhanced, for, He filleth all things with His perfection, and splendour, that they may be satisfied with His glory.

For the further proof and illustration of this principle we observe, that the human nature of God itself, entered the intermediate state at the moment of His decease on the cross. Jesus was entombed after the manner of the Jews. He had said to the malefactor, who was crucified with Him, expired, Luke xxiii, 43: "Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Now that the place of repose was prepared for Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, M

David, and all the prophets, with all who followed them in faith and obedience, were gathered at death, was paradise, but not the highest heaven, is proved thus. On the morning of the resurrection Christ said to Mary Magdalene, "Touch me not; I am not yet ascended to my Father:" John xx, 17. He had not yet entered upon His glory, or taken possession of His celestial throne. He had been only with the spirits of the just, and thus was fulfilled the ancient oracle found in Psa. xvi, and quoted and applied to Christ, the justice of which application is incontestably proved by Peter on the day of Pentecost, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." Upon our principle nothing is plainer than this passage, upon which so much has been written, and around which such obscuration has been brought. The body did not see corruption; it remained pure and fragrant in its bed of spices; the soul was not left in Sheol or Hades, in the happy mansions, in the intermediate state, it returned, entered into the incorruptible body, and the Lord Jesus, in His perfect manhood awoke and arose, to sleep and to die no more, but to carry at His girdle the keys of every condition, visible or invisible, of the living or the dead, in the universe of God.

There are two other passages of the New Testament



## THE INTERMEDIATE

in which the same principle  
tained. Rom. x, 6, 7: "Say n  
shall ascend into heaven? (tl  
down from above :) Or, who s  
deep? (that is, to bring up (t  
dead.)" Both the one and th  
complished, and the word of s  
mouth and in our heart. B  
into the deep, the abyss wh  
beings invisible to us. This  
Eph. iv, 9: "Now that he  
but that he also descended fr  
of the earth." I find that th  
copalian expositors of the Ap  
called, vindicate the article, "E  
into the invisible state, upon  
sufficient for my purpose that t  
place for the soul of Christ,  
entombed, than the throne of  
localities in question, as we c  
ance so I profess no knowle  
altitude in the one case; the ur  
in the other; are alike myste  
and beyond the sphere of our  
All that I contend for is, th  
congregated community of Hi  
were in paradise, waiting for

access to His more immediate presence, just as they and all the ransomed, who are now before the throne, are waiting for the higher transports and the brighter glories of the resurrection of the last day, and the final consummation.

But some may ask, How was Christ conducted thither, and in what manner was He employed? The apostle Peter has shed a ray of light upon this dark question. 1 Peter iii, 18—20: "Being put to death as regards the flesh, but quick or living as it regards the Spirit. He went and preached to the spirits in prison; [or more properly, in *safe keeping*] which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah." Upon this passage I observe, first, that it distinctly proves the separate existence of disembodied spirits, according to any translation, or any interpretation which can be fairly offered. And secondly, if it mean no more than that the Holy Spirit assisted Noah in preaching to the antediluvians, it is a most obscure, entangled, and unaccountable manner of expressing a most clear and simple principle. Would any of us employ this language, or language at all like it, to express that sentiment? I think not, and it seems to be only the refuge of a mind that does not understand the apostle, or seeks to misinterpret him.

And now, upon the principles which we have laid

## THE INTERMEDIATE

down, where is the incongruity supposing that Christ went to a profligate and unbelieving sinner of Noah, despised the oracles, did and outraged the institutions of person and His work, and set thus a defiance of His power as to of the deluge indispensable ; and across the separating gulph, the plishment of His own mission, disbelieved, and the faithfulness standing all their false reasoning singled out by the apostle, boldly blasphemed, because the company, and had been the lonely land of vagrancy, desolation, horror

But then to those in the blessed invisible state, how rapturous are Saviour's communications ! The spirits of just men would feel a powerful interest in that event the desire of their heart, and establish security and triumph. Would unbounded exultation to know that pardon was paid, that the propitiation which they were exempted from introduced to those happy abodes

that the sufferings of Christ were over and past, the joy set before Him realized, and His glory begun, that every promise was verified, that the compact of eternity was ratified in the blood of God's dear Son, and that in the ascending honour and majesty of their Lord, they should attend His triumph, be introduced to the presence of His Father's glory, without spot or blemish, and inhabit the mansions which God had built for them before the corner-stone of this visible creation was laid ?

Again, Jesus returned at His resurrection to our world, and brought a company of the distinguished spirits of the invisible state with Him, and raised their bodies together with His own, to reveal His power, and make manifest His victory. We gain this important information from the apostle Matthew. At the decease of the divine sufferer, "Behold the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent, and the graves were opened." We are not informed where these sepulchres were, but unquestionably in the vicinity of Jerusalem ; and the bodies still remaining entombed must have been visible as the graves were *opened*, visible from the day of the crucifixion till the third morning, that is, during the whole of the Jewish Sabbath, in which period, according to the law of Moses, they would not be

## THE INTERMEDIA

touched. It was before the third day that the angel of G Roman guard, and removed t trance of the sepulchre of C then arose as the firstborn fi more, and immediately after bodies of the saints which sle of the graves, and went int appeared to many. I do not imagination in conjecturing w made themselves manifest in and many others, and thus the striking verification, John v, say unto you, the hour is com the dead shall hear the voice o they that hear shall live." A was also given of the resurre when all that are in their grave and shall come forth, they tha the resurrection of life, and th unto the resurrection of dar shewn themselves to appointe priate witnesses, they returne manifest to the multitude of r blessed mansions, to await th the victorious and jubilant asce and glorified Lord. Oh what co

interest was in all territories while Christ was transacting the mighty matters of our redemption and His own kingdom. All the immortals, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, and reasonable beings in the whole creation were attent, alert, and in high and eager expectation, waiting for the next disclosures.

Once more, it seems certain that the period of forty days between the resurrection and the ascension was spent by Christ, partly in the intermediate state, and partly with His apostles. "To whom," says Luke, "He shewed Himself alive after His passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." There are many recorded interviews, and in every one of them we feel a profound and most inquisitive interest; doubtless there were many others of which the Holy Spirit has not thought it needful to give us an account. But the appearances were often sudden and unexpected, and His departures abrupt and inexplicable. Whither did He go? Not into the wilderness, to be again tempted of the devil. Not to the right hand of the Majesty on high, for the time of His ascension was not yet come. Whither? but to hold intercourse with those who were exulting in the effects of His obedience and sacrifice, and who were expecting to behold immediately the transcendent manifestation of His divine and mediatorial

## THE INTERMEDIATE

glories. Oh ! how delightful  
thus dividing these holy, interesting  
moments between the church  
deemed in the blessed mansion

“ The saints on earth and a  
But one communion ma  
All join in Christ their Li  
And of His grace parta

Further, when the Lord Je  
throne of His Father, He too  
thousands of His redeemed as t  
triumph, and the sharers of  
and affecting in the highest  
given of His final departure fr  
he led them out as far as to E  
up his hands, and blessed th  
pass, while he blessed them, he  
and carried up into heaven :”

“ And while they looked stea  
he went up, behold two men st  
apparel, who also said, Ye men  
ye here gazing up into heaven  
who is taken up from you into  
in like manner even as ye ha  
heaven :” Acts i, 10, 11. They  
whelmed to consider whither  
transactions might be taking ]

beings, to whom, as to them, He sustained the nearest relationship. What condescension and kindness on the part of the two angels to forego the blessedness and honour of attending Christ on this memorable occasion, that they might comfort and instruct His amazed apostles, and with what rapid wing, having executed their commission, would they rejoin the ascending triumph at the portals of glory! Have we any further information in the Scripture on this subject? I answer that we have. The Lord Jesus went immediately to those blessed abodes, and opened the gate of paradise; or some mighty angel, as with the stone at His own resurrection, did it in His name, and forth issued the exulting multitude, and joined the ascending Saviour in the air. Now for the authority of Scripture on this point. In Ephesians iv, 8, we read "Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." The question, therefore, is, whom did Christ lead captive at the time of His ascension to His Father's throne? Demons, fiends, and devils, say many of the commentators. I am perfectly astonished at this interpretation. It is said that on the cross He spoiled principalities and powers, making a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it; but were Satan and his confederates dragged reluctantly up to heaven? Did their malignant and



## THE INTERMEDIATE

baleful eyes gaze upon the Red  
Did their profane and cloven  
defile the bright and spotless  
would appear to me more incre  
than such a notion. The pass  
Psalm lxviii, which describes the  
of the ark into the holy place  
for it on the hill of Zion. The  
striking type of the ascension of  
the joyfulness which it inspired  
But were there any captives dr  
brought out in misery to see th  
savageness and horror to accom  
and scowl upon it? Was there  
tines, or Edomites, or Moabite  
occasion for this inhuman purp  
suppose it for a moment. The  
bating has in this passage, nothi  
analogy utterly fails. To what  
and beautiful ceremonial will y  
and the fiends?

But it is said there is a refe  
triumphal processions, and it  
Christ's entire and absolute conc  
at the time of His ascension. ]  
When the psalm was composed  
ducted to its rest and dwell

Romans and their triumphs were unknown. They had not yet appeared to act their part upon the arena of the world. (2) Could anything be more savage and atrocious, more cruel, inhuman, and diabolical, than the triumphal processions of the imperial city? It was not enough that the laws and liberties of the conquered nations were trampled down; that the victims of their ferocity and despotism were exhibited to the insults of the mob and the gaze of the citizens, but there must be a pantomime to mock them in their degradation, and to deride the habits of their home and country as the spectacle passed along; and the sentence for their slaughter must be given at the same moment when the victor entered the capitol, and the victims were offered to the gods. Oh, if there be anything which inspires me with horror and hatred of the Roman name, it is the brutality and ferocity of a Roman triumph. Let not anything which Jesus the Redeemer of enslaved and oppressed peoples ever did, be likened to such things as these; much less the purity, pomp, and mercies of His august and most glorious ascension.

Besides, the natural sense of the expression is outraged by these ideas. Captivity is when a number of persons are led away in force and oppression by the enemy. Captivity captivated is when the same

## THE INTERMEDIA

persons are rescued by a me-  
triumphantly restored to their  
When David and his men l  
flocks at Ziklag, and the A  
land and carried away every  
tivity. But when David and  
Amalekites, rescued the wiv  
carried the spoil and propert  
captivity itself was led capti  
stances could inspire intenser  
more overflowing joy. I ask,  
statement apply but to the red  
Church? They were in capti  
agents, who held them in cru  
sion. But the Son of God, by  
grace, rescued, re-captured, b  
freedom, holiness, and joy;  
regions they were secured from  
all storms and dangers, and wai  
and Lord was ready, by His in  
humanity, to receive them to H  
aloft to their final and everlas  
so proper to ascend with Him  
throne? to be His guard of ho  
divine and gracious person in  
jubilations, while attending an  
tial lyres, and gazed upon the

fectly unparalleled spectacle? Oh when He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, and received gifts for men! In this view the correspondence and analogy between the type and the antitype is most clear. The ark itself had been captured, and the Philistines domineered over the whole country. The Israelites were in disgraceful and insulted subjection, but the ark was re-taken; the liberties of the nation were retrieved from enslavement and oppression: they became a free and prosperous people in the days of David, as redeemed by divine power and under the immediate shelter and patronage of God they went up to His sanctuary, captivity captivated, amid the profusion and plenty of divine bestowments. Just so Christ arose triumphant from the tomb, came out of the power of His adversaries, and led up the myriads of His people to the glory and happiness of His kingdom, amid the gifts and manifestations of His infinite bounty.

The human nature had never entered the holiest of all before, and the gates of that city were closed; the innumerable multitude of the saved, and the attending armies of the angels, shout, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." The vigilant and glorious seraphim at the portals ask, "Who is the King of Glory?" The response is

ready, "Jehovah Jesus, He is the King of Glory.  
Lift up your heads, Oh ye gates."

"Up He rode, followed with acclamations, and the  
sound

Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tuned  
Angelic harmonies; the earth and air resounded;  
The heavens and all the constellations rung;  
The planets in their station listening stood,  
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.  
Open, ye heavens, your living doors, let in  
The Great Redeemer from His work returned!"

Then the language of the 47th Psalm received its most signal illustration and accomplishment: "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises. Sing praises to our King, sing praises, for God is the King of all the earth, Sing ye praises with understanding. God reigneth over the heathen: God sitteth on the throne of his holiness."

God our Saviour entered, shewed the scars upon His sacred person—the evidences of the shedding of His blood—of His propitiatory death, was accepted of the Father, sat down upon His throne, and said, pointing to the great company of the redeemed spirits, "Behold I and a part of the family which Thou hast given Me."

Oh, what was the marching of two millions of people in the desert; what all the melodies of the

temple; what any festivity and jubilation on high and solemn occasions among the angels themselves, to the glory, interest, delight, and triumphings of the ascending Saviour and this portion of His redeemed Church. An event only to be paralleled when He shall come again with the trump of God and the acclamations of all heaven, to raise the dead, and consummate all the magnificent designs of His mediatorial empire and enterprise.

But because He has entered within the veil we shall enter also; admission to that supreme felicity is now the privilege of all the saints. We enjoy transcendent advantages both in this world and in that which is to come; all possible light, and love, and joy, flow upon us like a river, and swell like a tide, and spread like an ocean. When we depart, it is to be with Christ. When we are absent from the body, it is to be present with the Lord. The Lamb will lead us at once to living fountains of waters, and God will wipe away every tear from our eyes. It is not the rest and felicity of Abraham's bosom, but the unceasing vision and fellowship of Him who has loved us and washed us from our sins in His blood, and made us kings and priests unto God. There we wait till the day of our coronation, till the happy and victorious morn when the robes of the resurrection shall be assumed, and we shall be per-

## THE INTERMEDIATE

fectly fashioned to the likeness of the human body according to the working of the law, to subdue all things unto Himself.

III. I proceed to adduce testimony of the life and happiness of being glorified after His resurrection, to the glory of the Father.

It has been shewn in the previous discourse that the human soul is a separate and disembodied life. The thief, and the thief was with Him. His sacred body was on the cross. His soul was not left in the tomb. It did the body of the Holy One so. The apostle Paul has argued and proved the universal resurrection of the dead. The fact of Christ's resurrection, if Christ be risen, there is a resurrection. Now, in like manner, and upon the same principle, if the soul of Christ was in the disembodied state, the same principle in relation to all His believing people. The separate and independent life. I deny it to Christ also, or there is no exclusiveness in the apostle's reasoning. The arguments are precisely parallel. Shall we follow the apostle Paul and his inspired inspiration, or shall we go along with the materialists?

not them who can kill the body, and do no more, but fear Him who can cast body and soul into hell :” Matt. x, 28, is conclusive proof, from the lips of Christ, of the distinction of the body and the soul, together with the separate and independent life of the immaterial principle. The materialist can offer no interpretation of these words, they will in no form agree with his theory. In the conversation with the Sadducees Christ said, That the dead are raised, even Moses shewed at the bush, when he called God the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for He is not the God of the dead, but of the living : all live to Him. These expressions fully prove a separate life of calm communion with God, antecedently to the incarnation of Christ. If it shall be thought to militate against any of the foregoing reasonings, let it be remembered that though our Lord on the cross said, “ Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,” which is a stronger and more endearing expression than merely “ living to God ;” yet we are certain that His soul went to paradise, and did not ascend to the throne of glory and dominion till forty days after.

Again, John iii, 16 : “ God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” John iv, 14 : “ The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into



everlasting life." These words seem to be of a conscious, active, unsuspended life, full of belief through all eternity. If there is a chasm in existence as that which separates the time of the decease of the persons to whom it is spoken, to the distant morning of the resurrection, ought not Christ, in all fairness and justice, to have given an intimation of it? What a cloud upon His own doctrine it would be. He had said, as upon the other side, He would have said, It will be several thousand years before the promised life begins. The words of Martha also are most memorable, "Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life: that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." If these words do not mean that the soul and happiness of the soul, notwithstanding the corruption of the body, and that the mind suffers no extinction of its life, even in the grave, it is impossible to say in any language that doctrine could be delivered.

John vi, 57, 58: "As the living Father hath life in himself, so he that eateth of the bread which I give, he shall live by me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth of the bread which I give, even he shall live by me. This is the bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers ate manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever."

shall live for ever." Does Christ now live by the Father, or is He extinct? If He is alive and in glory, so must they be who believe in and live by Him; and the contrast is striking between the manna and the animal and earthly nature of the fathers who fell in the wilderness, and the imperishable truth which Christ delivered and the indestructible mind and everlasting happiness of those who received it and believed it. The manna and the body which it nourished are gone; the truth and the mind in which it resides, and has its home and habitation, shall live for ever. If the mind perishes with the body, there is no room for the contrast which Christ has drawn—it was perishable doctrine received into a perishable essence, just as much as the manna and the bodies of the fathers.

On this point nothing can be more clear, absolute, and certain, than Christ's affirmation, John xii, 26: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am there shall also my servant be. And again, John xiv, 2, 3: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also." If Christ be in glory we shall live, and be in glory with Him; in like manner we pass through death to be with Him in intimate and ineffable fellowship. It is also the great and final prayer of the intercession, John xvii, 24:

## THE INTERMEDIATE

“Father, I will that they also  
me be with me where I am, that  
my glory which thou hast given  
the testimony of Christ as the  
ness, every veil and cloud is  
done away, and the truth shining  
perspicuity, power, and splendour

A strong proof of this doctrine  
words of Stephen as he expired  
Acts vii, 59: “They stoned Stephen  
God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive  
Psalm xxxi, 5, it is said, “Into  
my spirit, thou hast redeemed me,  
and Stephen simply confided in the  
fulness of Christ. “He that believeth

“Shudder not to pass the sea  
Venture all thy care on Him  
Him whose dying love and  
Stilled its tempests, hush  
Safe is the expanded wave  
Gentle as a summer's eve  
Not one object of His care  
Ever suffered shipwreck to

Again, in Acts xxiii, 6—8, I  
Pharisee still in that respect; I have  
of my old principles, most amazed  
been effected in my mind, but  
adhere to, and zealously defend,

separate life, and the resurrection of the dead. Rom. viii, 10: "The body is dead because of sin; the Spirit is life because of righteousness." There is no legal or natural necessity that the body of a believer should die; Christ has borne the penalty of the law, and utterly removed the curse. Death to the believer is a mere harmless circumstance. The necessity arises from the fact that sin has defiled and injured the body, and its entire dissolution is effected that it may be re-organized in glory and incorruption. But there is the legal and moral necessity that the spirit should live, on account of the inherent principle of holiness which divine grace has implanted, and the imputation of that righteousness of Christ which has been received through faith. The spirit is life, a vital, sanctified essence; very striking and distinct is this contrast between the body and its destination to death, and the soul undying and indestructible by the will and power of God. Romans viii, 38, 39: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." On the principles of materialism there is utter separation, there is a protracted extinction of the whole man. What reciprocations of love can there be between the creature and God, through Jesus Christ, when no mind or intellect exists, and

the ashes of the body are scattered to the winds of heaven? But death shall not separate from His love; it shall bring us to the nearest intimacy, to the fulness and felicity of that everlasting and most affectionate embrace. 2 Cor. v, 1—8: "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." Here is an impregnable bulwark, here is a rock firm as Mount Zion itself, upon which we can stand unmoved amid all the storm, and wrath, and darkness of controversy. To die is only to put off the tabernacle, to be unclothed.

"Burst thy shackles, drop thy clay,  
Sweetly breathe thyself away,  
Singing to thy crown remove,  
Swift of wing, and fired with love."

We are to be clothed upon as Adam in the halo of glory before the fall—as Christ in the splendour of the transfiguration. Mortality is to be swallowed up of life, as the victims upon the Hebrew altar were lost and disappeared in the purity and brightness of the descending and miraculous fire.

Mark the two expressions—we know and we are confident. I desire no other evidence, no firmer or more complete demonstration.

We may also here refer to the rapture of the apostle Paul; he was caught away into paradise, but the whole region was emptied of its inhabitants, the population was gone, the people were ascended to the third heaven—their triumph and happiness were now complete. He was then caught away to the third heaven, and saw and heard unutterable things; or this order was inverted, and he first witnessed the splendour and fulness of joy of the third heaven, and then visited the ample region where the glorified beings once had been. In either case paradise had been, and the third heaven then was the blessed abode of the spirits of just men. Phil. i, 21: To live is Christ, to die is gain. In no sense can death be gain but upon our principle, and to depart and be with Christ, the consummation of all rest and blessedness. This verse alone might settle the dispute for ever—1 Thess. iv, 15, connected with v. 10: "For this we

say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them that are asleep." Christ died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. To sleep, then, is to live together with Christ; they that fall asleep in Jesus do not perish.

"They die in Jesus and are bless'd,  
How kind their slumbers are,  
From sufferings and from sins releas'd,  
And freed from every snare."

Sleep, we have seen, in the ordinary sense of the word, by no means implies the cessation of thought, but is compatible with high activity of the intellect. How much less when it is employed to express the glorious visions, the unruffled repose, the calm sunlight, the love and joy of heaven!

This is certain, that to sleep, in the sense of Scripture, is to live with Christ, and the believer desires no more, than to see Christ, and to be with Christ, and to live to Christ, in order to rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory; 2 Tim. i, 10: "Our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the *gospel*." I lay the stress on the *gospel*. The *gospel* which reveals the blood of Christ, takes away the guilt which renders us obnoxious to punishment.

It supplies the legal righteousness which entitles honourably to everlasting life. It brings the sanctifying Spirit by which we are qualified for the blessings and felicities of the divine presence. There is a legal innocence which exempts from danger, a meritorious obedience which renders annihilation unjust, an inward holiness which renders it most beautifully natural and proper that the soul should live. And God must overthrow His own counsels, and lay His own honour prostrate in the dust if, on our departure from life temporal, we enter not instantaneously on our life eternal. Heb. xii, 23: Spirits of the just made perfect. Perfection not in contrast with the antecedent state of imperfection on earth, but with the imperfect condition of disembodied souls in their state of rest and peace, antecedent to the ascension of Christ, for the spirits of just men were not made perfect in the heavenly life before Christ came, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. Not made perfect till the incarnation, death, and victory of Christ, not till the Mediator of the new covenant had shed and sprinkled His most precious blood; but now made perfect, joined with the innumerable company of angels, as the assembly and church of the firstborn, we come to them, we have communion of thought, principle, feeling, and religious service now, and we



## THE INTERMEDIATE

shall have in heaven communion, occupation, and honour, in quietness, and unbounded joy. 1 Pet. i, 23: "Of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed, which liveth and abideth in God, the incorruptible seed enters into heaven, and both are indestructible." 2 Pet. i, 11: "For so an entrance shall be made unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, as long as I am in this tabernacle, I will be putting you in remembrance, lest I must put off this my tabernacle, which Jesus Christ hath showed me." "I shall then depart, and enter heaven amid the praises of angels, the congratulations and the presence of kindred spirits arrived and waiting." 2 Pet. ii, 10: "Fear none of those things which shall come to pass, whether tribulation, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or death; behold the devil shall be put into prison that ye may be tried; he shall be put to death, and I will give thee a crown of life instantaneously." "I shall be rescued from the wild beasts to which I am now thrown, the savage faces of the wild beasts, the amphitheatre, the mad and frenzied mob, to the pure and mild and benignant aspect, the in-

of the spirits of the just, to the glory of Christ, and the countenance of God.

The living creatures also in the book of Revelation imply and express life, activity, service, adoration, and the deepest joy ; Rev. xiv, 13 : "I heard a voice saying to me, Write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth." This plainly expresses immediate blessedness with Christ.

Rev. xxii, 9 : The revealing angel says, "I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book." He was alive then, and fulfilling a high and glorious commission, delighting to assist in unfolding the history of the conflicts and the triumphs of the church; Gabriel was sent to Daniel and the Virgin Mary, but one of the ransomed spirits of the just made perfect in glory is sent to instruct and illumine the apostle John.

This interpretation has been disputed, but even if the objection should be deemed valid, there are other passages in this symbolical and mysterious book which clearly and certainly express the interference of the disembodied spirits of the just in the great transactions of the Church on earth and the world at large. In Rev. v, 8, 9, "The four-and-twenty elders and the four living creatures fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours. And they sung a new song,

## THE INTERMEDIA

Thou art worthy to take the seals thereof, for thou wast sacrificed unto God by thy blood, out of thy tongue, and people, and nation, and living creatures incontestably the Church, is proved by the fact that thou wast offered unto God by the blood of Christ, and the angelic messengers. In the visions are opened, one of the four seals, and he said, "Come and see ; and when he had sealed, I heard the second living creature say, and see"—and so of the third seal, which distinctly expresses deep interest in the living creatures in the event, and the place, and the ministry and service rendered by them to the apostle.

It is certain, also, that myr  
in 'all ages, have confided in  
delighted in these prospects.  
are the instances, both in anc  
some of which have come ur  
which believers have died with  
light and lustre upon their m  
their faith, high and uncloude  
placid their victory. To the l  
the hope full of immortality,  
instantaneous and everlasting

When the tongue could no longer speak, the eye has looked unutterable things.

“Then when ye hear my heart-strings break,  
How sweet my minutes roll,  
A mortal paleness on my cheek,  
But glory in my soul.”

Spectators have been almost conscious that a procession of heavenly messengers had borne away the victor to the presence of Jesus, and the honours of his coronation. Is all this delusion? Are piety, virtue, wisdom, zeal, holiness, all the estimable qualities of our present nature, in their highest combination, mocked, deluded, forsaken of Deity, in the last hour, and left to falsehood and mistake at death? Oh! most incredible of all incredible things, which the wild and wayward imagination of infatuated men has ever devised.

Finally, either Christ is alone in His enthronement and glory, or His redeemed people, in the disembodied state, must be with Him. Will any one suppose for a moment that Christ remains for ages, and generations, and centuries, without seeing any effect whatever of His humiliation and sufferings in heaven. Upon the theory which we oppose the grave has all, and Christ has nothing for thousands of years. The celestial territory is without a population, and Christ has none but angels to behold His glory, and celebrate

## THE INTERMEDIATE

His praise. Our minds revolt at the supposition. The prayer of the people is accomplished, and His people are gathered. He is, and behold His glory ; Rejoice in this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, from all nations and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and crying with a loud voice, saying, Salvation unto our God alone, glory and honour, and power, and dominion, for ever and ever. . . . They shall be no more thirst any more ; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. And they shall sit in the midst of the throne, and shall lead them unto living fountains of water, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. . . . to join that society, and enter into that society, and share in those occupations, and enjoy those joys, and fruits, and felicities, and glories, for ever and ever. . . . morn. We consider the proof from all these passages most satisfactory without quoting many more. . . . be adduced. "Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel."

There are yet two questions upon which should be spoken. Is the independent principle entirely disconnected

at death? We think not. Either some attenuated and undefinable substance passes off with the spirit from the body at death as its proper vehicle, or some ethereal, light-like vesture is provided in which to act and shine till the day of the body's resurrection, when Christ shall say, "Oh death, I will be thy plagues, Oh grave, I will be thy destruction." This vesture will move with the rapidity of thought; material objects impede not its activity; light must be as opaqueness and solidity compared to it. Oh, what an unfettered essence! and how far beyond our comprehension. The apostle has, however, decided that, when unclothed of the body we shall not be found naked.

And further, what is the nature of that blessedness which the soul experiences and enjoys in the disembodied state? It is described in Scripture as far, perhaps, as it can be described to us with our present faculties, as rest and glory, and knowledge, and holiness, and joy, in the immediate and beatific presence of God the Father and of the Lamb. The uncreated, unshadowed, everlasting light will shine upon us in perfect and perpetual emanations. We shall be partakers of all the glories and satisfactions of Deity; we shall be filled with all the fulness of God; we shall not need the light of the sun, neither of the moon, for the Lord himself will be an ever-

## THE INTERMEDI

lasting light, and our God our mourning will be ended.

In conclusion, on this branch we have seen that the human essence independent of any using the present body as its being and controlling it at pleasure capable of a distinct and existing organization has fallibly, even then provided with adapted to its glorified condition purgatory, but an interminable or evil, happiness or misery, on faith and holiness, on the of the gospel. The righteous the beatific vision, are radiant before the throne ; and at the resurrection robes, in the perfect consummate felicity and holy soul, will enter upon the new earth which arise out of the flagration, and wherein righteousness, and Christ, in the unclouded summation of His work, shall be the eternal kingdom, and God shall

The unhappy division of time to the present time, and to it

men are still conducted, no change, no release has been effected for them, they still abide in their imprisonment till the time of public judgment and condemnation. What a multitude and what a society is there! the antediluvian rebels, the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrha, the cruel and licentious pagans, whose very religion was impurity and blood, the malicious and exasperated Jews who crucified the Lord of Glory, and the whole mass and accumulation of whatsoever has worked abomination or made a lie. Oh Lord, gather not our souls with sinners, nor our lives with impenitent and unbelieving men.

I do not enter upon the question of the abode or prison-house of the fallen angels. They are in some sense abroad, but under the control and restraint of divine government, for though we read of Satan as the prince of the power of the air, and as going about seeking whom he may devour, we read also, that the angels that sinned are delivered into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment. On the solemn and tremendous occasion of the final judgment, Satan and his accomplices will appear, in order to be publicly, and in the presence of the whole rational creation, adjudged to the irreversible perdition, the ultimate and everlasting hell. The vast legions of the wicked will also be brought forth from the place



of their present imprisonment, to be condemned with their tempters and destroyers. Then the gehenna of the intermediate state will be utterly abolished; the consummate happiness of the just, and the finished misery of the wicked will then be realized, and—with the exception of that one dreadful prison and receptacle of all sin—purity and blessedness will reign throughout the whole extent of the divine kingdom. This is the doctrine of the Apostle John, Rev. xx, 14: “Death,” the place of imprisoned bodies, and “Hades,” the place of imprisoned souls, “shall be cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” This is everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. This is departure into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.

This passage harmonizes most exactly with the doctrine we advocate; the interpretation is clear, and the solution plain, for the existence of the gehenna of the intermediate state, up to that period, is proved by its destruction then, since that which has no existence cannot be destroyed.

Let us recapitulate these facts and principles. A future condition of conscious and active life was expected by the believers of ancient times, taught by the Hebrew prophets, sanctioned by our Lord in His parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and the

apostle Paul has assured us that the way into the holiest was not made manifest while the old tabernacle was standing. Our Saviour's title of Fore-runner proves that there could be no admittance to the throne of God before the incarnation and ascension. The language of the Bible assumes another tone, and speaks with a more explicit and abundant illumination, after Christ had ascended: it could no longer be said, "He holdeth back the face of His throne and spreadeth a cloud upon it," but on the contrary, both in heaven and upon earth, we all with unveiled face behold the unveiled glory, and are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. We are plainly assured that the human soul of Christ went to paradise, and in what manner it was employed there—that He came back at the resurrection and brought many others along with Him. There is reason to believe that He spent His time partly there and partly with His apostles during the forty days which preceded His ascension. At His ascension He led captivity captive, that is, He carried the redeemed Church from paradise to the highest heaven. At the judgment of the final day the unhappy division of Hades, which exists till then, is to be evacuated, and the place to be done away for ever. This is no inconsiderable chain of evidence and illustration:

let us not shut our eyes to the light, but regard it with unprejudiced and unbiassed minds.

If it be not a positive demonstration, I think it a fair, and satisfactory, and highly probable conclusion at which we have arrived, and one wrought out of regions and materials from which such a result could hardly have been anticipated.

What a view is thus opened to us of the economies and arrangements, and distributions of God! Vast are His plans, wide, spacious, and various, are the regions of His dominion, innumerable the orders, ranks, conditions, of the populations of His mighty empire, His universal and most amazing monarchy. The apostle, in surveying the dispensations of God towards Gentiles and Jews, was filled with astonishment and overwhelmed with awe. With even higher emphasis and deeper solemnity and emotion, after the review we have taken, we may say, "Oh the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." Let me endeavour to impress on you the deathlessness of your own spirit, the immortality of your own soul; let each one think for himself, "I can never die." Oh see to it that you carry not into eternity the odious and frightful visage of moral deformity. Oh, wash in the fountain open for sin and uncleanness. Look to

Jesus, who says, "Look unto me and be ye saved." "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." Believe and be saved; earnestly pray that you may be directed how to apply these great truths of the gospel to your own minds by the influence and teaching of the Holy Spirit, and remember that your natural faculties can solicit this supernatural, this divine gift, for our Heavenly Father has promised to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him. And thus, in the present life, receiving and enjoying the peace and privileges, the absolution and righteousness, the hopes and joys of Christianity, deriving ever increasing refreshment and comfort from the "wells of salvation," the doctrines, the precepts, and the promises of the Bible, you will hereafter depart to be with Christ, which is far better, to drink in felicity at the fountain head, to expatiate on the quenchless splendour and cloudless illumination of the uncreated light, of the blessed and only Potentate, which is now unapproachable.

IV. The practical issue and result of the whole argument.

1st. High and rational satisfaction and joy.

It is an immense discovery that we have in us a nature and a principle which can never be extinguished. In this world we are encompassed by dangers, visible and invisible. Nothing can be more

## THE INTERMEDIATE STA

uncertain than our life and happinessful and tumultuous state. But you All the creatures conspired and cor you cannot destroy your being; y deathless and inextinguishable. I that I may ascend and live for ever. O our souls, for the hope and cert taneous and immortal life.

I know not how it affects othe brings an entrancing satisfaction to : see it in a clear and convincing li receive upon it additional illumin enhances the dignity of our being, t mortal, and soon to walk and shine mortals in heaven.

2nd. Lively and unfeigned gratitu God. To Him we owe both the d principle and the possibility of our lasting life and happiness. Remo blood, His justifying righteousness, Spirit, and the whole prospect is ecl guished in irrecoverable oblivion. ] for tribulation and anguish, indigna upon every soul of man. If our v. certain and defined, if our convict deep and penetrating, our ransomed ] perpetual hymn of praise and servic

Him who, by His own death, overcame the sharpness of our death, and opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. To receive Christ and believe in Christ in the glory of His divine person, the efficacy of His atoning blood, the perfection and splendour of His transcendent righteousness, the power of His priestly advocacy and mediation, is life and blessedness on earth, and preparation for the higher life and the incomparable joy of the eternal kingdom.

3rd. The cultivation of personal and progressive holiness.

Let not wrath or malice, pride or passion, disfigure those minds which are so soon to shine in the beauties of immortality. Let not vice or intemperance debase those bodies which are to rise again in glory and incorruption. Let all the powers, both of body and soul, be hallowed to God. Let your members be instruments of righteousness unto God, the fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

4th. Live a life of anticipation. Eat the grapes of Eschol in the dryness of the desert. The apostles lived upon these prospects. Oh, awake, quit you like men. Deliberate as arithmeticians, as mathematicians do, and reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.

5th. How shall we escape if we neglect the doc-

## THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

trine of Christ and His salvation. See not Him that speaketh, for if they refused him that spake on earth, may not we escape if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven. Be consistent to the truth of Christ, or awake to right the legitimate effect of it. Set your affections above, for to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace daily, however paradoxical it may appear, may never die; say not, Soul, soul, thou art full of goods laid up for many years, eat, drink, and be merry, but follow after righteousness, love, patience, meekness; fight the good fight, lay hold on eternal life; walk in the light of glory; receive light flashing upon you from the glory which is within the veil; confess to the strangers and pilgrims upon earth; and let the glory of heaven on your countenance. Let the light of the countenances of celestial splendour go forth to the world as a profession and example; arise, shine, for the day of the Lord is near, and the glory of the Lord is rising, and in due season, at the proper time, to you,—

“Go to shine before His throne  
Deck His mediatorial crown  
Go His triumphs to adorn,  
Made for God, to God return.”

6th. Finally, we shall meet again; all the wise and holy, the spiritual and the good, associate together and are at home, in the mutual and reciprocated recognition of each other in the everlasting habitations. The prospect is most consolatory and full of hope and joy. It is the privilege and prerogative of noble and regenerated natures, that their departure to higher regions exercises no less blessed influence than did their abode with us on earth, they lighten us from above, like stars by which to steer our course, so often interrupted by storms and difficulties, those to whom we turned in life as the beneficent, the helpful, and the wise, now attract our longing and aspiring glance as the perfect, the blissful, and the glorified: they await our coming, and we shall go to be with them and with the Lord.

“There is a world we have not seen,  
Which time shall never dare destroy;  
Where mortal footsteps have not been,  
Nor ear hath caught the sounds of joy.

There is a region lovelier far  
Than sages tell or poets sing;  
Brighter than summer beauties are,  
And softer than the tints of spring.

It is all holy and serene,  
The land of glory and repose;  
And there to dim the radiant scene  
The tear of sorrow never flows.



It is not fanned by summer gale,  
    'Tis not refreshed by vernal showers ;  
It never needs the moonbeam pale,  
    For there are known no evening hours.

There forms that mortal may not see,  
    Too beauteous for the eye to trace,  
And clad in regal majesty,  
    Move in unutterable grace.

In vain the philosophic eye  
    May seek to view the blessed abode,  
Or find it in the curtained sky ;  
    It is the dwelling-place of God."

## ENTRANCE TO THE HOLIEST BY THE BLOOD OF JESUS.

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“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.” HEBREWS x, 19.

The text is an inference and conclusion, great, solemn, sacred, and affecting—derived from the foregoing argument. The argument may be briefly traced from the 14th verse. By one offering Christ perfected His work, as far as He Himself was concerned. On the cross He exclaimed, “It is finished.” Having completed His work of sacrifice and sin offering, He is gone into heaven, and is set down at the right hand of the Father, expecting till His enemies be made His footstool.

“No more the bloody spear,  
The cross and nails no more,  
For hell itself shakes at His name,  
And all the heavens adore.”

But by that one offering He has perfected for ever all those who trust in Him,—that one offering and

## ENTRANCE BY THE BLOOD OF

sacrifice, and substitution, believed mind and conscience, leaving no trace ever behind. It also sanctifies the element of holiness in the mind—in and consecration to the service of God become instruments of righteousness; the fruit unto holiness, the end. Sin has not the dominion because because grace abounds; the dominion is destroyed. Grace reigns, through eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord, liberation from guilt, by the one offering, induces a true and deep devotedness; heaven and glory are made secure. we become servants unto God, and long as we live, and for ever in this so, by one offering, He perfects for are sanctified. Of this the Holy Spirit. The evidence and demonstration is verse in the Old Testament which ceeds to quote, and which, with whom he wrote, would be deemed convincing, and satisfactory; a citation of the Holy Ghost is, by the admission final: the quotation is from Jeremiah. This is the covenant I will make saith the Lord; I will put my law

and in their minds will I write them, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Citation had been made before in the eighth chapter. Then it was adduced to prove that their forefathers expected another and a better economy and dispensation, and, consequently, that the then existing covenant or dispensation would be abrogated or dissolved. Here it is quoted to prove that they expected a perfect and all-sufficient sacrifice for the removal and remission of all sin ; sins and iniquities were to be remembered no more ; but the annual and daily sacrifices could not remove sin. It is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins, but God, by the Hebrew prophets, promised the absolution and everlasting remission of all sin, and therefore a sacrifice adequate to its expiation. This sacrifice once made, there could be no need of repetition. This sacrifice was accomplished and perfected in and by Christ, so that four great principles are hereby evolved and made manifest,—first, the inefficacy of all the Jewish oblations and sacrifices to remove sin,—secondly, the testimony in their own holy writings, that there should be a sacrifice which was adequate to the removal and remission of all sin,—thirdly, the manifestation and reality of this in Christ and His one offering,—fourthly, consequent removal and remission of all our sin by faith in that

one oblation, without any repetition for ever. Of all this the Holy Ghost in the writings and services of the Old Testament is the argument of the apostle; reasoning on the kindred subject of the epistle to the Romans: "But the righteousness of God, without the law, is manifested by the law and the prophets, through the righteousness of God which is by faith in Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe, so that, in both cases, the forgiveness of sins, and justification in the sight of God, is by faith in Christ. There is the testimony of the Hebrew prophets, and the Holy Ghost in this line of argument, the text is a deduction,—“Having therefore, brethren, let us enter into the holiest by the blood of

I. Let us notice first what is holiest.

1st. In relation to place, it is the innermost part of the Hebrew temple. The first covenant had also ordained service, and a worldly sanctuary, the tabernacle made, the first wherein was the table, and the shewbread, the sanctuary, and after the second was the sanctuary, which is called the holiest of all.

golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant, and over it the cherubim of glory shadowing the mercy seat. That was, at that time, the holiest place on earth, the most sacred spot under heaven. At the bush, which burnt with fire, yet was unconsumed, God said to Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." There was a transient manifestation of the Divine Presence—here was the abiding home of the Divine Glory—the place of the habitation and constant residence of Deity. Again, Nadab and the seventy elders, went up the mountain, and saw under the feet of the Divine Majesty a pavement of sapphire stone, and as the body of heaven in its clearness. That vision soon vanished, that glory, seen once, passed away for ever. On Mount Sinai, God spake out of the darkness, clouds, and lightning, and delivered the Ten Commandments—it was once, and no more; but here, in the holiest of all, was the abode of the God of heaven, which remained, and was permanent for ages and generations. The same was true of the holy of holies in the temple of Solomon—it was the fixed and abiding dwelling-place of God; but it is remarkable that, in this epistle of the apostle Paul to the Hebrews, he takes no notice

## BY THE BLOOD OF JESU

whatever of that magnificent structure and illustrations are borrowed from the tabernacle of Moses in the wilderness, this was the type and figure of the temple in heaven; for when these things were accomplished, the priests went always into the sanctuary, but the high priest alone, once every year, with the blood, which he offered for his own sins and the errors of the people. The Holy Ghost testifies that the way into the holiest of all was not manifest while the first tabernacle was standing. The holy of holies then is heaven, which was not open and manifest in former times, as it is now that Christ has entered, being come an high priest of good things, after a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not of this building, that is to say, not of this building, but by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, to obtain eternal redemption for us." Christ was in; He is the forerunner for us, made after the order of Melchisedec; He has entered into the holy places made with hands, the figures of the true, but into heaven to appear in the presence of God as our intercessor. But the holiest of all, in

was the figure of the true—that glorious and innermost sanctuary was the type and figure of the place, and seat, and throne of God in the highest, innermost, holiest heaven—this the Holy Ghost signified. The sacred structure in the wilderness was designed under the direction of the Holy Ghost; the Holy Ghost filled Aholiab and Bezaleel with wisdom and skill for the work and service. If the constitution of the visible fabric was by the inspiring Spirit, then much more the deep and spiritual principles which it embodied and typified are of the Holy Ghost. The whole tabernacle, if we may so speak, is the fruit and effect of the elaborate inventions and arrangements of the Spirit of God.

Let it be remembered, also, that the cherubim of gold looked down on the mercy seat, bended their faces towards the ark; cherubim were also figured upon the tapestry of the sacred veil; the Jewish people saw only the badger skins dyed red, the beautiful curtains of the outer court, but they knew that there was a holiest of all replenished with the costly symbols of divine worship and adoration. In like manner we see only the blue firmament or the crimson clouds, when amid gold and glory the sun goeth down; but we know that there is a heaven of ineffable splendour and repose which we see not; we are in the outer sanctuary, the cherubim and



seraphim are glorious creatures w  
whom all the splendour and incon  
cance are manifest and revealed.

Permit me to call your attention  
there was such a place, that Mos  
prepare that tabernacle, that holy  
its furniture according to the patter  
the mount—there it stood an indu  
table fact, the inner objects were vis  
who went in to perform the sacred se  
surface was open to the eyes of  
gazed upon it with astonishment a  
higher, mightier, and more magnifi  
a veritable, indubitable fact, which  
eyes of myriads upon myriads of  
beings with eyes as flames of fire,  
like lightning, and raiment white  
the exterior heavens and earth onl  
who have home and dwelling pla  
is an interior holy of holies enjoye  
spiritual and holy creatures, wh  
possession of the everlasting habit  
the divine genius and originality  
institutions, I see the condescens  
and benevolence of God in the  
constitution of these pictorial res  
invisible fabric of the celestial and

2nd. The holiest has relations to persons as well as places. It is the person which sanctifies the place, not the place the person: as the residence of God, the abode of Deity, the dwelling place of the Divine Majesty and Holiness, it is the holiest of all. Christ said, ye fools and blind, whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? whether is greater, the gift, or the altar which sanctifieth the gift? It is God who sanctifies and glorifies His own residence. So God dwelt between the cherubim, a cloud covered the tent of the congregation and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle. There is the Holy One Himself—what is the place? what is the ark of the covenant? what is all the pomp and costliness, the splendour and the gold without God? God is in His holy habitation, and that makes it to be the holiest of all. So at the dedication of Solomon's temple, "it came even to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets, and symbols, and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying, For He is good; for His mercy endureth for ever: that then the house was filled with a cloud

BY THE BLOOD OF JES

even the house of the Lord ; so that  
not stand to minister by reason of  
glory of the Lord had filled the he  
likewise in Isaiah's vision, "I beh  
a throne, high and lifted up, and I  
temple : above it stood the seraph  
unto another, and said, Holy, h  
Lord of hosts : the whole earth is  
It is the Lord, the Holy One, th  
own habitation. So likewise in th  
God is called "The blessed and o  
King of kings, and Lord of lords  
immortality, dwelling in the light  
approach unto, whom no man hat  
to whom be honour and power e  
the book of the Revelation, it is s  
of the seven candlesticks, I saw  
Son of man, clothed with a garr  
foot, and girt about the breast wit  
It is Christ in His glory in th  
churches. John saw also a thron  
and one sat on the throne, and h  
look upon like a jasper and a sa  
there was a rainbow about the th  
unto an emerald. It is the Hol  
throne. Thou, O God, art glorious  
in praises, ever doing wonders ; G

the fountain of all life, and happiness, and beatitude.

“Thou art the sea of love,  
Where all my pleasures roll;  
The circle where my passions move,  
And centre of my soul.  
Not all the harps above,  
Can make a heavenly place,  
If God His residence remove,  
Or but conceal His face.”

God, then, in open and unclouded manifestation of His being and holiness, His spotless nature and perfections, is the Holiest.

I call your attention again to the fact, that there was a symbol which Moses saw. The similitude of God shall he behold, not in dark speeches, but as a man speaketh to his friend, so did God speak to him. There was a glory before which Aaron ministered, and the people worshipped. There was a splendour which Solomon and the priests of his day could not easily sustain. So Deity and divine glory does exist, and in heaven is unveiled. “He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is the rewarder of those who diligently seek him.” “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” “Hereafter we shall see him as he is.” “As for me I shall behold his face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.” “His servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face.” There, in

BY THE BLOOD OF

the holiest place, the holy angels  
Thee, O God, we acknowledge I  
All the earth doth worship Thee.  
and seraphim perpetually do cry  
of just men made perfect wear the  
the elders, clothed in white raiment  
their heads crowns of gold. Th  
before the throne, and worship  
ever and ever." O there is a l  
are holy beings, there is the H  
Holy One! It is a vast and m  
admitted there, and to have com  
ship with God, and His angels,  
be of that association, and to bel  
Now, at the present time, "we  
Zion, to the city of the living Gc  
company of angels, to the ge  
church of the firstborn which a  
to God the Judge of all, to the spi  
perfect, and to Jesus the Media  
nant, and to the blood of sprink  
better things than that of Abel  
world we converse only as child  
a child, I thought as a child, I  
understood as a child;" so, like  
follow the Lamb whithersoever F  
through a glass darkly, but in th

comfort of soon being in the holiest of all, and seeing the Holiest One face to face.

We have arrived so far at two great principles :—

First. There is a holiest place, where the thrice holy God is enthroned, and manifested, and worshipped by all the unsullied and restored beings of His great and wonderful universe ; and

Secondly. It is possible that we may enter into that place, and be joined to those worshippers. You may enter and adore, I may enter and adore ; this vision is for you, this rejoicing, and purity, and perfection is for me, and all believers. We have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus.

## II. The way into the holiest.

Angels, all holy beings, have free access everywhere, and at all times ; go where they may, they see the face of their Father and our Father in heaven. But here are creatures fallen, defiled, sinful, and this is the difficulty, and the question is, how shall these have liberty of access into the holiest ? The great and divine answer is—by the blood of Jesus. Jesus said of himself, “I am the way, no man cometh to the Father, to heaven, to the holiest, but by me.” It is a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say, His flesh. It is a way opened upon a new principle, not by personal innocence, but by the efficacy of the Great Sacrifice.

## BY THE BLOOD OF

It is a way always open, and ever  
and indestructible, a new and liv

In order to open and prepare  
crucified for us men, and for o  
put our trust in His glorious a  
The name Jesus indicates the h  
name by which He went, and wa  
nised when He was upon earth :  
now that He is in glory. There  
Deity, there is salvation in this  
Son of man, Jesus is the Son (   
manifested in the flesh ; and we  
of God which He has purchased  
Marvellous and amazing in its po  
is the blood of Jesus ! “ By th  
have entrance into the holiest, a  
and one Mediator between God  
Christ Jesus.” The entrance is b  
in two forms. 1st. In relation  
Himself, and presented to the l  
“I have power to lay down my  
down. “I have power to take it  
it again, and ascended to the Fa  
and signs of the crucifixion up  
Divine Person. This great truth  
under the Levitical law, when 2  
of the consecrated victims in tl

went into the holiest, and sprinkled the blood with his finger seven times upon the mercy-seat. So Christ entered into the true holiest, took His own blood, which was proof and evidence that He had offered the great sacrifice, and made the great atonement, and was now fully prepared for the sacerdotal work of advocacy and intercession. By His sufferings and death, the honour of the law, the glorification of divine justice, the evidence and proof of divine rectitude, even in the forgiveness of sin, is made manifest and perfected. Law, justice, divine purity, the legislation of God, the government of heaven, all the interests of the moral empire of the universe, ask no more in order to the fullest satisfaction, than the blood of Jesus. The offering of the blood of Jesus is once—once offered to bear the sins of many, once presenting the blood of the sacrifice to the Father, once, and once only, but the virtue of it is perpetual and everlasting, and the priesthood and advocacy founded upon it is without a pause. “So if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; it is Christ that died, yea, rather, who is risen again, who also maketh intercession for us.” Christ having entered with His own blood, being already there, in the perpetual discharge of the duties of His own priesthood, we may enter, and follow in His steps, bow down in the shadow of



His person, and amid the rays  
an high priest became us, who  
defiled, separate from sinners, at  
the heavens."

2nd. In relation to man the  
holiest by the blood of Jesus, and  
sprinkled upon the human  
propitiatory is said to be ordained  
made manifest, that we may come  
worship and adoration, believing  
uncovered, as the holiest of all  
the temple was rent in twain.  
forth as a propitiation through  
believing in that work of Christ  
and on our behalf in heaven, when  
we come, it is our way. We kneel  
seat; we bow before the cross as  
we bow before the High Priest  
glorious majesty; we do this with  
upon our consciences as revealing  
atoning virtue and expiatory power  
and minds. As the blood was  
door posts of the Israelitish house  
blood was sprinkled on the clouds  
blood was sprinkled upon the  
vessels of the ministry, so is  
sprinkled upon our believing

and "if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ who, through the eternal Spirit, offered Himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God." So are we purified and made perfectly clean; there is blood before us upon the propitiatory; the sacred drops fall upon our conscience; we are a blood-besprinkled people; we are elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. So, with the blood of Jesus upon us, purifying our moral nature, and removing all our guilt, with the blood of Jesus offered on our behalf by the Great High Priest, we may boldly enter the holiest, assured of our acceptance and salvation. Here is Christ's great glory; He is a consummate priest, with a consummate sacrifice. Here is our great consolation; by the blood of Jesus with boldness we may enter the holiest. I call your attention again to the facts which are expressed in these representations; there was a sin offering under the old law; the blood was sprinkled upon the propitiatory. Aaron did stand and minister with acceptance in the holiest; the people were symbolically and mystically cleansed and made pure; pure, the Jews say, as Adam on the day of his creation. In like manner,

and corresponding with these symbols, Christ did suffer and pour out His life on the hill of Calvary. Christ did rise. Christ is in glory, at the right hand of the Father. Christ's sacrifice is effectual in the heavenly holy places; all its virtue is distinctly recognised and fully appreciated there. We have not followed cunningly-devised fables,—the facts, the doctrine, the arrangements, the whole class and system of truth and principle is emblematical, significant, peculiar, distinctive, divine, and amazing, and carrying self-evidential proof that they are of God. The symbols are indubitably of divine appointment. God said to Moses, Build the tabernacle, prepare the mercy-seat, bring the victims, sprinkle the blood; the entire invention is of heaven and not of man. The models of the sanctuary were presented to the eye of Moses, and it was said, See thou make all things according to the pattern shewed thee in the mount. So the great truths and principles which they embody, and reveal, and exhibit, are of God. Divine light is shed upon questions affecting, in the deepest manner, our acceptance and salvation, and the plan and method of divine government respecting us; they are among the most important and vital topics to which our attention can be given. There is a divine radiance, and there should be a profound conviction of the truth in all these matters. It is

not like the poetry of Homer, or the speculations of Plato, or the philosophy of Aristotle, or the histories of Livy, which whether true or false is comparatively of little consequence; but the doctrine and truth of Moses and of Christ are our light and life, our salvation and happiness, both for the present world and that which is to come.

I specially remark two things. 1st. The manner in which the blessing is brought into our minds,—it is simply by faith; as I see the propitiatory and believe in it, I may make use of it, and by it, in the light and glory of it, I may draw nigh to God. As I see with the mental eye Christ the High Priest and Sacrifice, and lay my finger on the blood, I receive all the virtue of it into my nature. As I believe in His righteousness I am covered with its splendour, and my person is irradiated with its glory.

“My faith would lay her hand  
On that dear head of Thine,  
While like a penitent I stand,  
And there confess my sin.”

According to the Hebrew law, all the oblations of beasts which a particular person offereth, he layeth hands on them whilst they are yet alive; no messenger may impose hands. There is no imposition but by the owner and sacrificer, as it is written, he shall lay *his* hand, not his servant, nor his wife, nor

BY THE BLOOD

his son, nor his messenger, 1  
If five persons bring one s  
hand, one after the other, a  
place where they impose  
sacrifice, that is, in the ho  
The killing is immediately  
that imposeth must do it  
both his hands upon the hea  
his neck or sides, and noth  
hands and the beast. He  
the two horns, and makes  
confess our sins at the altar  
sacrifice, God is faithful an  
sin ; the work is done ; the  
sin is purged away ; the ju  
in all their light and splen  
by faith we draw nigh to  
blood, and having the blood  
conscience.

The great Christian ordin  
is intended to represent thes  
manner. Christ is evident  
for us, and having by faith  
advantages, and happiness,  
tionary oblation, we eat of  
this cup in remembrance of  
death till He come. Chris

drink of this cup of the new covenant in my blood which is shed for many." So it is sealed and authenticated in all possible solemnity and simplicity; is the truth and doctrine by which we live now, and shall live for ever: He that thus eateth His flesh and drinketh His blood hath the fulness of present consolation, and shall have the blessedness of everlasting life. Oh! what marvellous effects are ascribed in Scripture to the blood of Jesus. We have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins. We are redeemed, not with corruptible things as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin. We have justification by His blood. We walk in light, and are illuminated and set free by the blood of atonement. We are glorified by His blood, "These are they who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, therefore are they before the throne of God." The song in heaven is, and to all eternity will be, To Him who has loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, be glory, dominion, pre-eminence, and power.

2nd. There is no other way for fallen men into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus. No other name is given under heaven, or among men, whereby we can be saved. The gate of Eden is shut, cherubim

## BY THE BLOOD OF

and the flaming sword prevented  
of life, by our own innocence  
enter, we have no innocence  
impossible, we have broken  
stopped, and the whole world  
By the abstract mercy and goodness  
satisfaction to Divine justice,  
are deistical, there is no entrance  
method, he brought a sheaf of wheat  
bring a sacrifice, he was refused  
God ; and the great lesson stands  
frontispiece of revelation. The  
from the beginning to this day  
for ever. Abel brought the first  
a bleeding lamb, and was accepted  
bleeding lamb was the figure of  
the way for Abel. Abel's entrance  
was by the blood of Jesus.  
recognised the same truth, the same  
doctrine. Abraham and Jacob  
which were acceptable to God  
steps of the patriarchs in  
sacrifices. Wherever they pointed  
was built for God, and rituals  
blood-shedding and blood-spraying  
and sacredly observed, and the altar  
not dedicated without blood ;

spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats with water, and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people, saying, this is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you. John the Baptist cried in the wilderness, "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world." Christ came not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and to give his life a ransom for many. The Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the book of Revelation, all testify to the same great doctrine of the slain Lamb, and that we have access to the holiest in virtue of His blood. Augustin and Luther, Jewell and Leighton, Davenant and Hooker, Owen and Edwards, Chalmers and Robert Hall, all the great preachers, all the able theologians of all time have substantially agreed upon these great points of faith; and Wesley, just before he died, is reported to have said, "I, the chief of sinners am, but Jesus died for me," a solemn asseveration from the lips of one of the best of men that ever lived, and who, after his labours, had rest, and hope, and assurance of salvation only in the merits of the Great High Priest, and His transcendent sacrifice. There is a remarkable passage in "The Spectator," quoted by M'Knight, the words are these:—"I must confess that I think there is no



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scheme of religion besides that of Christianity, which can possibly support the most virtuous person under the thoughts of the judgment; let a man's innocence be what it will, let his virtues rise to the highest pitch of perfection attainable in this life, there will be still in him so many secret sins, so many human frailties, so many offences of ignorance, passion and prejudice, so many unguarded words and thoughts, and in short, so many defects in his best actions, that without the advantage of such an expiation and atonement as Christ has revealed to us, it is impossible that he should be cleared before his Sovereign Judge, or that he should be able to stand in his sight. Our holy religion suggests to us the only means whereby our guilt may be taken away, and our imperfect obedience accepted." This witness I believe to be true; Oh! let us stand not with the Pharisee to plead our own righteousness, but with the Publican to cry, "God be propitiated to me a sinner." The beginning of our hope and confidence was in the propitiation; the progress and consummation of our faith to full assurance is only in the blood of Jesus. We have safely arrived at two great conclusions. 1st. That by no other medium than this we have entrance into the holiest, and if this way of access be rejected, you will never enter at all. 2nd. By this medium the freest access is

secured with the greatest liberty and the liveliest joy.

III. We may enter into the holiest with facility and boldness by the blood of Jesus.

The fact of entrance at all is remarkable, for into the figurative holiest of all, the Hebrew people did not enter ; not one of them, priest or people, saw it, save the high priest alone, and he once a year ; there is one exception to this, perhaps, in the wilderness, on the part of those who took down the tabernacle, and carried the ark of the covenant, and the implements of divine service, which were covered and veiled as they moved from one encampment to another ; the great mass of the Hebrew people no more entered the holiest, than they who died in the wilderness entered Canaan ; Joshua and Caleb were the only persons of that generation. Aaron alone entered the holiest of all. But all believers are represented as entering the holiest of all. First, mystically and spiritually in the exercise of faith and prayer daily ; we are said to come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. So we draw nigh to the propitiatory and receive the supply of our daily wants ; we may even dwell in the secret place of the Most High, and abide under the shadow of the Almighty ; like Jacob in his dream, we may see

BY THE BLOOD OF

the ladder and the angels of descending, and the Divine at the summit. There are experiences which resemble are visions and revelations the spiritual mind distinctly associates ; in public ordinances also to say, this is none other than this is the gate of heaven. thrice Holy One is made in services, and all this is by the

Secondly. We shall enter in and no figure, as a reality and extension. We know that if the tabernacle be dissolved, we have a house not made with hands, and we shall enter into it and take light affliction, which is but for us a far more exceeding eternal glory." He that hath wrought this thing is God, and we shall see the extent and vastness.

"Yes, I to the end shall

As sure as the earth

More happy, but not more

The glorified spirits

Beloved, now are we the sons

yet appear what we shall be, but we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is, we shall depart and be with Christ, which is far better, we shall die but it will be gain ;

“ To Jesus the crown of my hope,  
My soul is in haste to be gone ;  
O bear me, ye cherubim, up,  
And waft me away to His throne.”

Abundant entrance shall be ministered into the everlasting kingdom.

By the blood of Jesus we have entrance and access to our daily fellowship with God ; by the blood of Jesus we shall enter into heaven, as easily as we now go to prayer or go to sleep ; and so shall we be accepted worshippers before the spotless and everlasting Majesty.

“ Jesus, my Great High Priest, has died,  
My guilty spirit seeks no sacrifice beside ;  
His precious blood did once atone,  
And now it pleads before the throne.”

We do not live now in the spirit of bondage, but in the spirit of confidence, humble, holy, happy, reverential confidence before God ; not the spirit of fear, but the spirit of adoption. We may use great freedom of speech ; we may be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication let our requests be made known to God. We may die in

## BY THE BLOOD OF

like manner in the fulness  
same spirit ; no presumption, n  
may die in faith, die in Jesus,  
heaven. "In my Father's ho  
sions." "Father I will that t  
given me, may be with me, w  
may behold my glory." Oh !  
comfort, no hope, no joy, only  
without the blood of Jesus.  
there is hope, comfort, confiden  
life everlasting. Vast is the  
in the day of our departure fr  
then, I know whom I have b  
sensibilities are quickened am  
bodily dissolution. Conscience  
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principles of the mental and r  
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quickened and is all vital, viv  
other faculties may be so in  
perishing but passing into glori  
and blessedness to die as even  
saying, " Lord Jesus, remember  
To die as Simeon, "Lord now le  
depart in peace." To fall aslee  
feel as Paul, who said, " I have

have kept the faith." As Peter, "Shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." So tranquillity, consolation, boldness, in the prospect of dissolution, is secured, and by faith in the perfect work of Christ the expiring spirit enters into the holiest. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates: be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors," a sinner saved by grace, a saint purified in the blood of the King of Glory, demands an entrance and will be received with acclamation. We read of boldness even in the day of judgment. Christ will say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you, from before the foundation of the world." Then will be realized such access to the Father, such participation in the pleasures and joys of Deity as surpass all thought—For eye has not seen, nor the ear heard, nor the heart conceived the things which are prepared by God, for all those who are washed and made whiter than snow in the blood of Jesus.

Thus it appears that there is a holiest place, and a holiest Person, and that, by the blood of sprinkling, there is freedom, facility, and boldness of access for sinful men to the one and to the other; and, in conclusion, let me say:—

All the ancient rites and institutions of the Levitical law are abrogated, and to be abandoned; they served their purpose in their time; they constitute a

BY THE BLOOD (

language in which to express and principles of the gospel, aside, and to be used no more. The new covenant have superseded all law. Rest in this truth, rest in the certainty of this conviction—change—He is the same yes ever. The efficacy of His change—it is ever and always His priestly office does not change were many, and were not the reason of death, but this marks the beginning of an everlasting priesthood after the order of the Son of God. Oh! rest in this doctrine; let it abide as your foundation; be rooted in it; you will then stand and flourish as a cedar in Lebanon, and spiritual entrance now, a final entrance in due season. Look to the future prospect. As certainly as we shall be with God on earth, so certainly shall we be with Christ in glory. As certainly as we shall live now, we shall have the eternal life. As certainly as I behold you, so shall I behold you in glory. We shall see the vast and innumerable hosts of spiritual worshippers, the angels of heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect.

now belong to time, we shall belong to eternity. Oh! let God take off the veil, the veil from our minds, and the veil from His Scriptures, that now "beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, we may be changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." Let God only lift up the veil, and the holy of holies, in all its august glory, its transcendent magnificence and splendour, in the illumination, and vastness, and transparency of revelation, is made manifest to my soul, and my soul is opened to these manifestations.

Let this doctrine be preached, Christ said, "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Testify with Peter, on the day of Pentecost, repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Preach with Paul that God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself. What is the word of reconciliation? What is the ministry of reconciliation? Is it not this, that Christ receives our sins, and expiates them, that we receive Christ's righteousness, and are justified and glorified therein. "God hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Is not this glad tidings, tidings of great joy to all people? Oh! go not all round the universe, traverse not the circles of all science, and all literature, and pass by the altar, and overlook the sacrifice, and neglect the



holy of holies. The main, the greatest, the most affecting, the most consolatory, the most effective point of truth and doctrine is involved in the blood of Jesus. Blow the trumpet over the altar, call the people to the sacrifices, expound and interpret the salvation of Christ,

“ Bid, bid the heralds publish loud  
The peaceful blessings of His reign,  
And when they speak of sprinkled blood,  
The mystery to the heart explain.”

We do not argue, we do not debate, we care not for infidel objections; we simply open, interpret, and apply the great principles of the oracles of God. Every sinner has the greatest need of this doctrine, every man you see is a sinful man; divine justice, as with a drawn sword, is in pursuit of every sinner, and will overtake him, except he fly for refuge to the altar, and lay hold upon its horns. Justice, with the drawn sword, stops before the Great Victim on the cross, and bows down, and worships, and sheaths its sword for ever, and the sinner triumphantly escapes, and is exposed to peril and danger no more. How should we love Christ! How deep is our obligation to Christ! The love of Christ is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us. Oh Christ, by Thy Spirit light up that fire, kindle that passion! It will be to us seal of our redemption and

preparation for our part in that great anthem, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive blessing, and honour, and glory, and dominion, and power, for ever and ever. Amen."

## FAITH AND CONFESSION SECURE SALVATION.

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“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

ROMANS x, 9, 10.

THE context refers to the following remarkable passage in the book of Deuteronomy:—“For this commandment which I command thee this day is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off; it is not in heaven that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us into heaven that we may hear it and do it? neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? but the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth and in thine heart, that thou mayest do it.” This was undoubtedly true respecting the law of Moses, which was plain, obvious,

intelligible, near at hand, and easy to be understood. But if the law of Moses was plain and easy to be understood, Christianity is plainer and easier to be understood. "the righteousness of faith speaketh on this wise, not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead :) but what saith it? The word is, in thy mouth and in thy heart : is, the word of faith which we preach." Christ is come down, and has accomplished His great work of sacrifice and substitution. Christ is reascended into His glory, dominion, and power, to administer the gifts of His bounty,—the pardon, and righteousness and life, which are secured by His priestly mediation. You need not wish to go up to heaven to see the sinners of the human family are admitted the countless thousands—a multitude which no man can number—are around the throne. You need not descend into the deep, to see if any who confided in the merits of Christ, who trusted the salvation of their souls in His hands, are there ; there is not a single one of them. Faith adjusts and determines these questions, and as by a flash of lightning.

Moses describeth the righteousness which is required by the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them, that is, by sinless obedience to the

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as a covenant of works, he righteousness of faith, in contsaith, Believe in the Lord Je shalt live and be saved. To lbut believeth on Him that juhis faith is counted for sinless justification,—this is the great So that whatever perfect work, finished and immaculate obedier the legal covenant, faith will effe the covenant evangelical. If sin secure justification and eternal faith, with equal certainty, wil and eternal life in the other. T. Do. The voice of the gospel is of the law is, Do, and divine ac Do, and celestial glorification w. of the gospel is, Believe with righteousness, and make confes unto salvation. The two econo perfect contrast and opposition; the law is a righteousness of v the righteousness of the gospel of Christ transferred to the be faith. The words of the apos the Galatians are most perspicu and glory, "Knowing that a m

the works of the law but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." As a fallen creature and a sinful man, I feel that I am shut up to the faith; I see nothing but absolute and everlasting ruin by the legal covenant and upon legal principles, but a door of escape is open; I flee to Christ Jesus and take refuge in the gospel. I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I may be saved and live to God. In this view nothing can be more joyous, more triumphant, more amazing, than the text. May it be nigh you, in your heart as an inward festivity and rejoicing; in your mouth as matter of praise and thanksgiving; and upon your tongue, ready to be given as an answer to every man who asks the reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness, and reverence, and love. In these great matters we have the separate and independent testimony of Moses and the apostle Paul, two celestial and divine messengers who, like two separate witnesses in a court of human justice, solemnly declare their conviction and deliver their evidence.

I. Let us consider first, The truth and doctrine to be believed and confessed.

1st. The lordship and dominion of Christ. This

is a point of the highest consequence. The divine dignity and supreme power and authority of Christ are taught in many scriptures: Isaiah saw His glory, and spake of Him when he beheld the Lord sitting upon His throne, and His train filled the temple, and the seraphim in worship and adoration. To invoke Jesus Christ, to call upon him as God, to recognise His rightful rule and ascendancy over all the churches, is one of the first principles upon which the Christian communities were established. The apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians and all others that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their God and ours. Again, in the most solemn manner, he says, "I give you to understand that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed, and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." So that whatever derogates from the dignity and honour of Christ is not of the Divine Spirit; whatever exalts and magnifies Christ is of the Holy Ghost. "He shall glorify me and take of the things which are mine, and shew them unto you." As the effect of this, "Every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father, for to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."

In the days of His humiliation He said to His

disciples, "Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am." After His resurrection from the dead, He appeared to Thomas and the other apostles, and He said to Thomas, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands ; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side : and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered, and said unto him, My Lord and my God." So we read of the mighty power which the Father wrought in Christ, "when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Let the divine dignity and supreme power of Christ be denied, and what have we then to believe in, or to confess? that He is man only, and not God? then, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and that maketh flesh his arm ;" but Christ Himself speaks by the prophets, and affirms, "I am God, and there is no God else beside me ; a just God and a Saviour, there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God, and there is none else." "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Of Christ, moreover, it is said, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundations of the earth, and the



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beautiful example, as He was a living exhibition of all the elements of holiness. "Whatsoever things were true, and just, and lovely, and of good report," were in Him in all possible perfection. The example of Christ is more condemnatory of sin and sinners than the law : His example shews the possibility of perfect virtue, sinless moral excellence, in human nature. The example of Christ is the law alive : the law alive is more convincing of sin, more condemnatory of the sinner, than the law in the letter and spirit of the commandment. Some suppose that Christ saves by an open and general discovery of truth, by revealing the Father and the future life, but if we are not cleansed from sin, if our trespasses are not forgiven, are we fit for the communion of the Father ? or can the future life be a blessing to us ? To a sinful creature eternity is always arrayed in terrors. The paternal bosom cannot receive, unpurified and unprepared, the transgressor of law. Eternity has no glorious prospect for a guilty mind. In this view of the case the very word salvation is inapplicable ; the idea and sentiment are, according to this theory, as far removed from salvation as the east is from the west. But if Christ, by a life of substitutional obedience, by a sacrificial and expiatory death, bore our sins in His own body on the tree—if He died, the just for the unjust—if He came to give His life a

ransom for many—this is salvation. Further, if sin were transferred to Him, being innocent, and full of divine and peerless purity, and He submitted to the ignominy of the cross; if His agony and bloody sweat, His cross and passion, His precious death and burial, were the proper punishment and penalty of sin, then He is Saviour. If we being guilty, on the other hand, do escape the sentence of the law, are accounted righteous, are delivered from the coming wrath, do enter into peace here, and inherit eternal life hereafter, then there is salvation. It is most true that Christ has paid all our debts, and pardons all our trespasses, on the principle that a man of vast wealth and opulence, by a cheque for one thousand or a million pounds, can sweep away all the small debts and fractional accounts of a vast multitude of poor and impoverished persons, and enrich them by splendid and magnificent donations. So of Christ it is said, “Ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be made rich.” The ancient promise and prophecy was a promise and prophecy of salvation. “Of which salvation the prophets prophesied, searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when they testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.” “I bring near my righteousness,

and my salvation shall not tarry, and I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." At the birth of Christ the angels sang of salvation, the gospel publishes salvation, the apostles preached salvation. "God has set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." In heaven the song is, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever." In all these passages of Scripture the word salvation is in its proper place and its true meaning; but if any man shall deny that he is lost and ruined, shall affirm that he has no need of salvation, Christ will say, "I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." How should he be saved if the very principle of salvation is obnoxious and offensive to him? But if conscious of our lost and helpless condition, the salvation of Christ is revealed to us, and we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in our heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, we shall undoubtedly and triumphantly be saved.

3rd. The third matter to be believed and confessed is, the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. "God hath raised him from the dead." The angels said to

the women at the sepulchre, "He is not here, he is risen as he said, come see the place where the Lord lay." The Holy One did not see corruption. Peter on the day of Pentecost affirmed, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." This witness is true or it is false; if false, Christianity is ended, and would have been ended centuries ago; if true, and true it is, not one jot or tittle of the divine testimony can fall to the ground. Though earth and heaven should pass away, it remains in its freshness, power, and glory, to this day, and will remain to the end of the world. The apostle Paul, in the epistle to the Corinthians, argues in this manner: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; and if Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins, and they also that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished; but now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." The whole system of revealed truth is hereby confirmed, established, and fixed upon indubitable demonstration. Prophecy foretold the resurrection, and was herein fulfilled. This was the fact to which Christ referred, during His life and ministry, as the great proof and evidence of His Messiahship. It is altogether a superhuman, super-angelic, divine act and operation. It is impossible to all beings but God to raise the dead: there is in it, therefore, the finger

of Deity, the sign, and signature, and attestation of heaven to the work and office, the character and person, of Christ. It is vivid as the colours of the brightest rainbow ; it is decisive as Deity can make it ; it proved the sufficiency of His expiation, the acceptance and satisfaction of the Father with His great work of self-sacrifice and devotement ; it qualified Him for His priestly mediation in the holiest of all. We are sure now that we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is able to dispense to us, and all believers, absolution, righteousness, the Holy Ghost, all spiritual gifts and graces, and to prepare and make us meet to live and reign with Him in glory everlasting. "He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he has given assurance unto all men in that he hath raised him from the dead."

The resurrection of the Lord Jesus is the middle and chief link in a glorious chain of events extending from eternity to eternity ; it is the keystone of the great arch of revelation, which gives support, and coherence, and strength, to the whole system of Christianity. The entire fabric of the divine doctrine and disclosures is authenticated, confirmed, and established hereby, and we know the certainty of the things wherein we have been instructed. From all this it

appears plainly, that the sacred dignity and lordship of Christ, His salvation and grace, His resurrection and victory, are the matters to be believed and confessed. All that the Bible teaches finds here its fundamental and adamant principle, is brought into a small compass, is made easy to the apprehension of a child, and is the doctrine by which alone the world can be saved. This is the way—"Christ is the way, the truth, and the life," or there is no way, and truth, and life at all, and the minds of men are cast upon the dark and awful shores of universal scepticism. We may go on stumbling and stumbling till we fall over offences and are broken. We may go on doubting and doubting till we sink in perdition; or we may go on believing and believing and believing till we have passed all doubt, and left unbelief behind us, till we have arrived at the beatific vision, and the fulness of everlasting joy. We know whom we have believed, and are persuaded that He is able to keep that which we commit to him against that day, when the text will receive its amplest exemplification, and shine in the splendour of its triumphant fulfilment.

## II. The belief and confession that are required.

We are to believe with our heart and confess with our mouth. This is the current and manifest doctrine of Scripture; here is the open, full and unclouded light, and no darkness at all. Christ in His

own ministry taught, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The chief principle of the great apostolical commission is, "He that believeth shall be saved." Signs and miracles were wrought as the evidence and confirmation of this truth, and moral signs and wonders, spiritual and amazing transformations, are wrought by the belief of it to this day. Paul said to the Jews at Antioch, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." To the Philippian jailer, it was said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." To the Ephesians it was said, "By grace are ye saved through faith." Very striking is the affirmation to the Hebrews, in the epistle to the Hebrews, "Now the just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." The text is ample and emphatic to the same point and purpose. But what is the belief required?

In reply to this question:—

1st. There must be a competent knowledge of



the facts and principles to which they believe in Him of whom But I say, Have they not sound went into all the earth ends of the world." We of these words have echoed in our our valleys, and among our principles and propositions are familiar with them from Scripture they are unveiled—or most of us, have from our inspired writings. In the darkness is passed and the truth

2nd. Faith includes a conviction of the reality of the things believed in, borne and the knowledge communicated, some shut their eyes and refuse to receive it, like the Pharisees were filled with prejudice against those things which contradicting and blaspheming Festus, who said, "Paul, thou art a madman, much learning doth make thee mad," replied, "I am not mad, I speak forth the words of truth."

Now as to the truth of the Gospel. In the first instance, there

testimony of men of whose honesty, and candour, and holiness, there can be no doubt ; they were men who testified to the facts and doctrines of the Christian religion, in connection with a sublime and transcendent code of morals, of which they were the living examples in full and fair exhibition. Their ministry was accompanied by divine signatures, God also bearing them witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His own will. The men of that age were, therefore, without excuse, and if the heathen, who changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, were inexcusable, much more they who rejected Christ in all the signs and miracles of His own ministry, and in the signs and miracles wrought by the apostles who came immediately after Him. The facts and doctrines respecting Christ, were by them committed to writing, these writings are transmitted to us in a perfect and unimpaired condition, through an unbroken line and series of believing witnesses. Signs and signatures of wisdom, truth, and holiness, are upon and in the book itself, every man who receives the record finds that moral health and purity are thereby transfused through his nature, that he is elevated and holy, just in proportion to his faith : faith is the barometer of his spiritual condition : if

there be none, he is utterly sunk in sense ; as it exists and puts forth its power, he rises, and opens, and expands to all noble actions, and all spiritual and heavenly aspirations. Thus he that believeth hath the witness in himself, and the Spirit of God testifies with our spirits that we are His children ; our faith therefore is founded on evidence which is satisfactory to our own minds and absolutely irresistible. We can say with Peter, " We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. For to whom besides can we go ? thou hast the words of eternal life." Our faith is the substance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. We firmly and tenaciously grasp the things that we have believed, we hold them fast and will on no consideration let them go, as an ensign will not relinquish the colours of the regiment, but with the last drop of his vital blood.

3rd. A third element in this belief is, the recognition of the authority and power of the things believed as a divine revelation and discovery. The things bear upon us, apply to us, and we are subject to their force and obligation whether we will or no ; so that if we believe we enjoy all the advantages and privileges of the evangelical economy, if we believe not we enjoy none of them, but are liable to the inevitable penalties.

It is in Christianity as it is in the animal and elemental world. Here I am, I find myself in the midst of the creation, here is light, air, the heavens around me, food, provisions for the sustenance of life. If I keep my eyes closed I must be blind ; if I will not open my mouth and breathe, I must expire ; if I will not take food, I must pine in hunger and perish in emaciation ; all this is by the law and constitution of animal life, and elemental phenomena. The law of nature is, open your eyes and see ; your nostrils and breathe ; your mouth and eat ; and in default of these, be blind and die. The evangelical law, the perfect law of liberty, is, look to the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved ; believe and live ; eat the flesh of the Son of God and have life in you ; receive His truth and doctrine into your nature ; inweave it with the very texture of your existence and your faculties : breathe the atmosphere of truth, or you will perish in your helplessness and sin. In like manner there is an economy of human law and jurisprudence, under which we are born without our own knowledge, or consent, or contrivance ; and in respect to which we cannot help ourselves. I am, and must be, an Englishman, whether I will or no. The laws of my country comprehend and embrace me whether I choose it or not. I must either conform myself to them, and enjoy all the privileges, advantages, and

immunities which they bring in any of the greater instances of imprisonment or exactly in like manner the which relates to spiritual sustain relation to Deity, near Deity is, in relation, nearer am nearer to God and His country and its laws. I am satisfied, much more than un- the one may be defective, in some points may be un- and everlasting, and cannot help yourself, it is so, whether might as well deny that subject to the laws of the land are an Englishman, and have the legislation and authority that you are under a moral religious economy; that God, as a being possessed of human law is, pay your debt violence to your neighbour, commit murder, and die by execution. The divine dispensation accept the indemnity public or justice will come upon

farthing, and with the last stroke of retribution; reject the gospel and the government of the King whom God has set upon the holy hill of Zion, and you will be excluded from His kingdom, finally for ever. Be an adversary to Christ, and the stone will fall upon you, which will grind you to powder. On the other hand, receive Christ, and absolution from all sin, justification at the bar of God, acceptance in the Divine sight, eternal life will follow. Kiss the Son and enter into His kingdom to enjoy all its spiritual and heavenly privileges; believe with the heart unto righteousness; make confession with your mouth unto salvation, not a hair of your head shall perish. God will say of your person as the law of England says of your property; he that touches you, touches the apple of mine eye. You shall come to glory, honour, and immortality; you shall awake up in the divine likeness, and be satisfied in the splendours of the celestial world. So it is not merely, the reception of things believed as absolutely true, but the recognition of their force and authority; as discoveries and revelations from God demanding implicit faith and obedience. Let me, moreover, remind you, that the animal economy and elemental nature is for time; the divine and spiritual constitution of things is for eternity. Human jurisprudence is for this world only, it can go no further; the

## SECURE SALVATION

jurisprudence of the gospel and first rudiments here; it is the grand solution of its debt to the world to come. Consider that the things believed are not a creature and do live; they are law and government. Yea, man though every man should be saved and the earth, and my own soul, the revelations of God remain truth and glory for ever. Do not disbelieve that the immateriality of your being, is in subjection to the law which you cannot reject and which is the risk and peril of an eternal death. There is the greatest possible inducement which we believe; they are not arithmetic, the demonstrative experiments of natural philosophy; your life to all eternity. Moses, "I call heaven and earth to witness; I have set before you life and death; I have set before you blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life that thy seed may live." There is something which approaches to intuition like light; we know it to be true by argument, despite all reasoni

testimony ; light and life come together ; the light is vital, the life is luminous. We believe as we live ; it is given us to live ; we live freely and of our own will. It is given us to believe ; we believe freely and of our own will. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power," in number, multitude, and purity, like the sparkling dew-drops of the morning ; so, we believe ; it is matter of cordiality ; we believe with the heart.

5th. We believe with personal affiance on Christ. We behold His glory and rejoice in it. Every believer says, I trust in His blood to purify me from all sin ; His sacrifice is the basis of my hope ; whenever he thinks of divine law, and the eternal world, he will cry, wash me, O Christ, and I shall be clean. Let me wash my robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. I trust His righteousness. By the disobedience of one, many were made sinners ; so, by the obedience of one, many shall be made righteous ; I trust that I am one of the many. I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live. I live by the faith of Christ, who loved me, and gave Himself for me. Christ is the end of the Law for justification ; He is this to me. He is the Lord our righteousness ; the Lord my righteousness ; I trust in His advocacy. He is the High Priest and Intercessor before the Throne of God. He is entered not



into the holy places made heaven itself, to appear in th  
—for me. I trust in His n  
His innocence, authority, and  
shall say, Lord Jesus, receiv  
redeemed me, Lord God of  
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word is nigh to us ; in our l  
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6th. And, finally, there i  
efficacy and moral results ; be  
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spirit, its frivolities ; we put  
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we aim to purify ourselves ;  
and inevitable effect of th  
Give me, then, these things :

A competent knowledge of

A deep conviction of the  
believed.

A clear recognition of th  
as a divine revelation.

Cordiality and affection towards them.

A personal appropriation of the principles, and the fruit and effect of faith in holiness of life,—then, in the name of the living God, I defy the world ; I defy death ; I defy Satan and all his legions ; I defy everybody and everything, but God, whose testimony it is ; and before Him I bow down in worship and adoration. Thus, we believe unto righteousness, and shall be accepted. We believe unto salvation, and shall be saved.

Having believed with the heart, with the mouth we are to make confession. There may be a faint, and feeble, and incipient faith, where it is unacknowledged, as in the case of Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, and said, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." He partly believed, and partly and imperfectly confessed ; and we read that among the chief rulers many believed on Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. So timid, half-hearted, and wanting in courage was their faith, and leading to no confession. Usually, out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak. Peter and John said to the Jewish Sanhedrim, "Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you, more than unto

God, judge ye; for we can that we have seen and solemn duty, most seriously demanded by Christ. of me and my words, of him ashamed when he cometh in and the holy angels." "When before men, him will the Father and the holy angels and the testimony are most awakened. The apostle John writes, "Who Jesus is the Son of God, God in God." The Church of Rome, who say they are named of Christ, who say his name, and have not denied him these days wherein Antipas was in martyrdom and confession unto martyrdom and the fearful, meaning timidly concealed or den numbered with the unbelievers that which is holy to the dead before swine; yet there a confession is required, and the footprints of Christ, who boldly affirmed His divine name. It is for the glory of Christ that we confess; hereby we

life in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom we shine as lights in the world. As you profess the true principles, you are a lighthouse, a Pharos, guiding distressed and imperilled mariners into the harbour of security and rest. If you hide the light, you may become responsible for lives lost, and all the mischief and desolation which ensues. Confess, oh confess the true and certain, the unequivocal and demonstrated facts and doctrines; confess in the Church, by songs, and celebrations, and sacraments; confess before the world and the wicked, when the testimony can be borne with advantage and with the prospect of conviction and usefulness; "and in nothing terrified by your adversaries, which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God." Confession is the token of salvation, it is said in this passage, and that of God. God will do it Himself; His seal and impress is upon the person making the confession, which will be acknowledged and brought forth in glory in the day of Christ. If you have the faith of Christ in your heart, and the confession of Christ in your mouth, you shall certainly be saved. By shame and fear grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you are sealed unto the day of redemption. By boldness and courage, and the meekness of wisdom, foster and cherish divine influence, and make manifest

your principles, and so your path shall be brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. If the doctrine and glory of Christ be understood and received, to be ashamed of Him, or afraid to make confession, is an utter impossibility. The man of science, who understands the philosophy of Newton, cannot be ashamed of him. The man of mathematics cannot be ashamed of Euclid. The man of poetic taste and sensibility cannot be ashamed of Milton. The man who appreciates the power of painting cannot be ashamed of Raphael; in all these cases shame is an utter and absolute impossibility. In like manner, the man who knows Christ and His salvation, cannot be ashamed of His gospel, but will always be ready to exclaim with the apostle, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." So we believe in the heart unto righteousness, and confess with the mouth unto salvation.

III. The righteousness and salvation which are to follow.

1st. By righteousness I understand not holiness of heart and life, though this is implied, but the righteousness of justification, of which Abraham was the great model and example, as is shewn in the fourth chapter of this epistle. To us the doctrine is incomparably more clear than it was to him: "If by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which

receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." By the righteousness of one, that is, Christ, the free gift cometh upon all believing men unto justification of life. How forcible and glorious are these expressions; when understood and realized they make the heart leap for joy,—it palpitates and goes quicker in the bosom. David, in the Psalms, often celebrates this righteousness: "Blessed are the people who know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance: in thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Isaiah speaks in the same language, when he exclaims, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn: this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." And again, in all the power and splendour of poetic beauty and sweetness, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me in the garments of salvation; he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels." But we sum up the whole in the great and memorable words of the apostle Paul, "What things were given to me those

I counted loss for Christ ; yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ. The righteousness which is of God by faith." So Paul believed unto righteousness and found justification ; and so must we, in like manner, receive by faith the righteousness of Christ, if we are ever justified at all : and justified we shall be, for who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect when it is God that justifies ?

2nd. We confess to salvation ; or, as we confess, we are saved—saved from the malediction of the law ; saved from sin and all its consequences ; saved from all remorse of mind now, and from the final ruin hereafter ; saved unto glory and honour, immortality and eternal life ; saved with the nations of the saved, who walk and sing in the light and glory of the heavenly Jerusalem ; saved in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation. There is an intimate and inseparable connexion between believing and justification by the righteousness of Christ, and between confession and salvation. He that believes not, and confesses not, is neither justified nor saved. On

the other hand, he that believeth, is justified ; he that confesses, is saved. Faith constitutes a spiritual union with Christ, and the believing mind. It may be said that it is impalpable and invisible ; so is the union and connexion between the body and the soul, and this latter union is a thread which may be snapped in a moment—in the twinkling of an eye—anywhere ; but the spiritual relation is deeper and closer, permanent and indestructible. Nature is deep and strong, by our connexion with the first Adam ; Grace is deeper and stronger, by our connexion with the second Adam. The recovery exceeds and surpasses the fall. Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound ; that, as sin has reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So, as we believe, it is unto righteousness ; and, as we confess, it is unto salvation.

In conclusion, let me remark. First. - There are unbelievers. Speculative and practical infidels, who deny and deride the threatened but future retributions ; but so, the thief and the murderer, in intoxication and madness, may mock at the retributions of human law—but they come in due season—both the one and the other. So have I heard of persons, deep in debt, indulging in riot and drunkenness, and supposed concealment and safety from the



## SECURE SALV.

officers of justice ; but they on a sudden, and by surprise terrible, and the capture comp divine justice, the executione heaven, will come in due time possibility of concealment or : is wrath, beware, lest he tal stroke : then a great ransom c

Secondly. There are stur gospel a rock of offence—al obscurity, and mist ; they believe or what they disbelie broken over that stumbling who believe, find a foundation of salvation.

Thirdly. Some are believers shall not make haste to leave : to give up his bulwark ; he s ashamed, nor confounded, in t the judgment, or in eternity. hold the beginning of your co the end. Say, with the apost justifieth, who is he that shall relief and happiness, what fr joy, are realized when we hav for Christ—our own obedience our own labours for His salv

saved ; let Christ save me ; I will not attempt to save myself. It is Christ's purpose, His act, His grace, and His glory. Strong is His arm, high is His right arm ; He can do it. Help is laid, not upon the feeble, but the mighty. Oh ! this is a wonderful text : " Believe unto righteousness, confess unto salvation." " I have written much," said Andrew Fuller, when near to death, " against the abuse of the doctrines of grace, but those doctrines themselves are my only hope, now," and the sweetest music in the ears of expiring piety cannot come, as Toller said, " from the good man's own labours. Tell him all he did ; recite his activity and his exploits ; his generosity, self-denial, and sacrifices ; he will sigh, he will sigh deeply ; if this were all, he would be involved in darkness and despair. Tell him of what Christ did, tell him that this is the record, ' That God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son ;' tell him, ' The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord ;' then he will receive peace and victory ; he will say, ' Lord, now lettest Thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen, not my own performances, not my own doings of any kind, but thy salvation.' " I deeply sympathise with the last words of Father Paul Sarpi, when he said, " I have nothing of my own but sins and miseries to present to God ; but I

am about to plunge into the bottomless ocean of divine love and joy, and I do it with comfort and confidence in and through the righteousness and salvation of the Lord Jesus."

## THE LOVE OF GOD MANIFESTED IN THE WORK OF CHRIST.

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“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

1 JOHN IV, 7—10.

PAUL is in some respects the most illustrious and distinguished of the apostles. He saw Christ in His glory. The God of our fathers chose him, and made him an elect vessel, and manifested His Son in him. “Rise, and stand upon thy feet,” it was said to him, “for this purpose I have appeared to thee, that thou mightest bear witness for me before kings, and rulers, and the children of Israel.” He was caught up into the third heaven, and saw the celestial paradise in

## THE LOVE OF GOD

all its glories. He says of his  
behind the chiefest of the :  
devotedness, suffering, and se  
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the Hebrews, the other and sho  
ments and memorials of his in  
his character and piety, as w  
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at last he should affirm, "I h  
I have finished my course, I hav  
forth there is laid up for me a  
which fadeth not away." Ye  
apostle. John was near to  
His public life and ministry ;  
and reflected the image of C  
and purity, and splendour, .  
apostles. The gospel of Joh  
spirituality, and heavenlines  
manifestation of Christ, as :  
His example, His miracles, J  
is the first, and foremost, an  
the evangelists. The book  
revelation of John, and to J  
the isle that is called Patmo:  
heard behind me a great vo:  
then turning, he saw Christ,  
person, walking in the mid:

candlesticks. To Daniel, the beloved prophet, who was of an excellent spirit, "the spirit of the holy gods was in him," was given the outline and first sketch of those marvellous predictions which are delivered in his book. To John, the beloved apostle, who was of the same temper and disposition, was assigned the work of completing and filling up the glorious and amazing pictures; this was the high privilege and sublime distinction of John. But if any one should ask me which is the deepest book of Scripture in which are the ripest, richest, fullest, and most perfect discoveries of God as to His nature, and mind, and will? I should answer—the first epistle of John. This epistle is a vast lake of transparent and living water; bottomless, profound, unsearchable; of all the productions of the Holy Spirit it is the most precious, the most heavenly, and the most divine. Other books of Holy Scripture may be as the roots, the stem, the branches, the leaves, the foliage of the great tree of revelation, but here is the flower and blossom, in all their prime, and freshness, and fragrancy. Beautiful and amazing is the text! There are several propositions which I take distinctly, and one by one, but in little hope of doing much for their illustration, and in some fear of marring their beauty, and impairing, rather than enhancing, their sweet and blessed impression.

## IN THE WORK OF C

### I. God is love.

Benevolence, affection, that wh  
piness, and the communication  
and creating felicity on all side  
be essential to Deity. It is neve  
though "he taketh up the isles a  
and weigheth the mountains in  
in a balance." It is never said  
is wisdom, though He is "the ble  
tate, dwelling in the unapproach  
only wise God." It is never sa  
though the seraphim respond on  
holy, holy, is Jehovah God of  
said God is justice, though He is  
in all his ways," as King of th  
never said God is truth, though  
will pass away before one jot or t  
shall perish." But it is written,  
in large letters of fire, and light,  
horizon, "GOD IS LOVE." All th  
fections of God are, so to speak,  
The result and issue, the flower  
His immense and boundless op  
There is everywhere the beauty  
order and harmony, the bliss an  
love superinduces and creates; s  
separate and distinct attributes

colours of the rainbow ; the red, the orange, the blue, all the prismatic refractions, are as power, justice, truth, mercy, but God, in the entire assemblage, in the totality of His perfections, is like the light—colourless ; one ; perfect ; spotless ; no shadow ; no stain. God is light—God is love. Various definitions of God are given, at various times, and under different circumstances, in Scripture. To Moses God said, “I AM THAT I AM,” the essential life, the living God. God only could so have defined Himself. This is opposed and contrasted with the dead idols of Egyptian and Assyrian worship, and to all the views and inventions of men, who change the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and birds, and four-footed beasts. The I AM, the Living One, in the midst of all these, is stupendous and sublime. Moses was placed in the cleft of the rock ; God passed by<sup>†</sup> and proclaimed His name, “The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin.” This is in contrast and opposition to ideas of implacability, vindictiveness, revenge, cruelty, in which attributes many of the heathen invested their fictitious deities ; and there are not wanting, still, men, with gloomy imaginations and blinded understandings, who do the same. How refreshful, joyous, and full of consolation is God’s own proclamation of His own name and



## IN THE WORK OF

nature—as full to overflowing  
and love!

Christ, when He was upon  
Spirit: and they that worship h  
in spirit and in truth.” This i  
formalities, the awful hypocrisy,  
worldliness which characterized  
synagogue in those times. It  
and awakening doctrine; it :  
“quick and powerful, and shar  
sword;” that the Infinite Spirit  
lence and love. In the first c  
we read, “This then is the me  
heard of him, and declare unto;  
and in him is no darkness at all  
gence, sincerity, purity, in ineff  
fection, in transparency and clea  
of meridian day, and the light is  
light; if we walk in the light a  
enlightened by the truth, and  
by the atoning blood of the spo  
Lamb, then God embraces the so  
God, in sweetest concord, and  
and fellowship for ever. God  
scorching, vindictive, lurid lumi  
God is bland, mild, parental,  
the sun in the salubrity and

morning, a morning without clouds in the consummate temperature of oriental skies. David said, "The Lord God is a sun." Remove, then, all ideas of anger, resentment, malevolence; think of uncreated, eternal, boundless, infinite benignity, this benignity in active forms of communicating life and happiness to all creatures, ruling, presiding, governing, replenishing the entire creation. The whole universe is full of God—God in activity working all things in all places,—and God is love. Love is that property which everywhere succours, comforts, refreshes, exhilarates, beautifies, adorns, blesses with every variety of happiness. Oh! let me hear, and understand, and believe, and worship, and adore God—God the Good One, the infinite goodness in the essence and abstraction of goodness. God is the Good One; He was the Good One from all eternity; He is to come the Good One, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. He is—what? Hark, ye angels!—hush, ye seraphim!—be silent, ye morning stars!—listen, O men, ye sons of men!—little children, listen! The oracle, the utterance is immense, amazing, and most blissful—in one word, "God is love." There is the greatest satisfaction and repose in this; I am thankful, past expression, for this word, this sentence, this information, this knowledge! Oh! the relief and gladness, the passing away of fear, and restraint, and bondage, when I see,

## IN THE WORK OF

and ponder, and understand, as God of love. God is love, love are interchangeable and identical.

II. The great and supreme declaration that God is love, is in the

There are evidences and manifestations of God's nature. The earth is full of His Lord. The sun, and the moon, —nature by night, in the vastling heavens—nature by day, in the plains, mountains, plains, valleys, waterfalls, is a vast and wonderful divine benevolence. The seasons are evidential of the same truth. Spring, when winter is over and the singing of birds is come, a turtle is heard in our land, when the figs are forth her green figs, and the vines give a good smell, is beautiful goodness. Summer, with its productions for the use, and benefit of man and beast, is proof of the God openeth His hand, and saith unto every living thing. Autumn, with its plenty—vintage and the wine—when the fields tread it sing songs of mirth and the fields of ripened corn—the reaper

the loud and happy shouts of harvest home—all this is expressive of divine benignity and kindliness. Even winter, with its innumerable comforts, its fires and its friendships, its conversations, its literature, its books, may be adduced as evidence of the great and consolatory truth of the text. The whole creation, the vast and beautiful universe, is at once the offspring and the evidence of divine love. With Paley we may say :—" If God had wished to make us miserable, or there had been any malevolence in His mind, every sight might have been made odious and ugly, every touch might have been made a sting, every sound a discord, every taste bitter, every smell offensive ; but, on the other hand, multiplied sights, and sounds, and tastes, and perfumes, are sweet, and odorous, and conducive in the highest degree, to human welfare and happiness ; every fruit, and flower, and aromatic, every object of beauty and enchantment, is full of love. But our reason, our speech, our intellect, our mental and moral capacity, our creation in God's own image, is demonstration of divine love—there, in God, is the original—here, in man, is the reflection. In what but benevolence did He make us all ? Did He not say, after each particular production of His wisdom and power, ' Good ?' And, at last, when reasonable and intelligent man came standing up in His own bright and blessed

resemblance, did He not say, 'Ve  
all this shines forth in glory, and

Providence is not without evid  
tion of divine love; as far as the  
of God are concerned, there is no  
providence over them is parent  
"Behold the fowls of the air; y  
feedeth them": much more wi  
guide, and preserve His own  
itself, the instruction and teachin  
ing it, is full of love; what rel  
solation, and joy His words have  
ages and among all people, since  
so He leadeth the blind by  
not; leadeth them in love, 'as  
leads the tender child; as the  
whom he delighteth: and we kn  
work together for good under th  
guardianship of the Almighty.  
the clearest evidence and the hi  
learn to move in charity; rest  
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that everywhere in Scripture, t

repentance. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will multiply to pardon." What provision and preparation is made in the dispensations of heaven for their honourable return to holiness, to happiness, and God; only let the wicked man say, "I will arise and go to my Father," and the Father is ready to receive him with embraces and benedictions. This is known and published, and is abundant vindication of the paternity and goodness of the divine government, is ample proof of the kindness, and most affectionate, and loving tendencies of the divine mind, towards the wickedest and the worst of human creatures; and consider, further, the divine patience and long-suffering, for the forbearance of God and the riches of His goodness, are intended to lead them to repentance; the benevolence of God, is apparent in all their history, and the truth of the text will not be eclipsed or darkened even by their final condemnation, it will be proved at last that God was slow to wrath and slack to punish. The punishment never falls upon the individual sinner, no, not on Pharaoh, till warning after warning, rebuke after rebuke, had been disregarded and despised; nor does it fall upon a nation till the measure of iniquity is full. The stroke of retribution came

not upon the Amorites, but was long delayed, till the iniquities did overflow. Note further, that all the misery of the world came in with the infraction of divine law; all the misery of the world is perpetuated by the infraction of divine law; only keep the law, only return to obedience, and the effect will be magical and amazing. Misery flies with the flight of sin; let disobedience disappear, and it is Eden almost in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, over again. There can be no higher proof imagined by man, of divine love, of the benevolence of the divine administrations, than this; that keeping of the law is fruitful, everywhere in the universe, of every form of satisfaction, and felicity, and well-being; that breaking of law, the infraction of the rules of divine government, is everywhere source of disorder and infelicity, and brings with its own penalty and punishment. Oh! providence—providence over good men, over God's own children, providence over wicked men, if seen in its right light, is evidence and demonstration of divine benignity; from the centre to the extremities of the vast circumference of universal nature, the government of God is a government of benevolence, and a mighty and prodigious demonstration that, God is love. But there is a greater evidence and manifestation than either in nature or providence, and beyond

what the mind of man could in itself have originated or conceived. Eye hath not seen; ear hath not heard, the fact and truth, if God himself had not revealed it. "In this was manifested the love of God towards us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." This is proof and discovery of love which eclipses and transcends all other manifestations of it. For consider our moral condition, *we did not love Him*, this of itself was a blot, and shame, and stain upon our nature; it is the greatest sin of omission; it is the violation of the first commandment of the law. A reasonable and intelligent creature without the love of God is a monster in the eyes of angels, as a child without love to his father or his mother is among men; let me fix your attention for a moment on the guilt of this non-affection; this is spiritual death; not alive to God, not loving God, is ever associated with other and more palpable forms of evil; but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ; by grace ye are saved. We receive quickening grace through Christ in virtue of His propitiation, while in that state of death; this is declared, by St. Paul,



## IN THE WORK OF

to be evidence and manifestation and speciality of divine love. we are raised up together with sit in heavenly places ; we then conscious of the tenderness and distinct peculiarities of touches and transforms our nature us to an imitation of the example of the Lord Jesus ; by love of God, and so morally when without strength, Christ We were without strength to do asks, " Will you set the thorns me in battle ? " His lightnings at a flash ; hast thou an arm like thunder with a voice like His to do Him any good—Thy gain man, be an advantage to the soul profit or loss is it to God, whether or wicked. Without strength I utterly helpless, that if you are perish ; so that God owed us no obligation to us, as without love without strength, as ungodly, and His holiness, He might sword, I will ease me of mine avenger Me of mine adversaries

deepest moral debasement, God took occasion to reveal the highest and strongest manifestation of His love. It is the striking and conclusive argument of St. Paul, "God commendeth his love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Consider the glory of the person whom the Father sent into the world, His only begotten Son ; He had sent various messengers to the Jewish people whom they misused and martyred, and at length He sent His only begotten Son, saying, "They will reverence my Son," O the Son ! "God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son." "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets ; hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." His Son, "the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person . . . Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they ; for unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee ?" The Son, of equal glory and majesty with the Father, all men are to

honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved." The mission of Christ the Son, is always represented in Scripture as the greatest evidence and demonstration of the love of God to man, and as the proof and guarantee that all things necessary to our full, perfect, and triumphant salvation shall be given in their season. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Consider, further, the great end and purpose for which Christ was sent into the world by the Father; to be a propitiation for our sins. Then, verily, we had sins; we were sinners; we were covered with transgression; polluted and defiled by sins. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." When the conscience is smitten with a sense of sin; when we see our vileness in the light of the divine law and the piercing radiance of divine purity, then we hail the testimony as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to be a propitiation and to save sinners. The word propitiation relates to the service of the Hebrew sanctuary. It was said to Moses, "Make a plate of pure gold, and set it upon the ark of the covenant;"

there the blood of the appointed sacrifice was sprinkled. God said to Moses, "Come to the propitiatory, to the mercy seat, and I will there speak and commune with thee." Moses went in to the holiest of all, and God spake to Moses over the propitiatory, and he spake to God. So, the communion between God and Moses was by the propitiatory. All the services of the Hebrew people went up to God by this medium. All the blessing, the presence and the promises of God, came down upon the people by the same channel. In this view of the subject, Christ says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." In the epistle to the Romans, Paul says: "God has set forth Christ Jesus to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins." God is in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing unto men their trespasses in virtue of the compensation made to divine law by the blood of Jesus. It behoved Him to be made like to His brethren in all things, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. So, if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous, who successfully pleads our cause, in virtue of His blood shed as a propitiation. It is the great doctrine of the Old Testament, in type and figure, of the New in

fact and reality, that the sufferings and death and blood-shedding of Christ are a propitiation. In the sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross, the justice of the Father has its satisfaction, and the law its honour, by the infliction of its penalty upon a divine substitute and surety ; and, in virtue of this sacrifice and propitiation, God forgives all sin, and shines in love and complacency upon the cleansed sinner. So, wash me, and I shall be clean, purify me, and I shall be whiter than snow, to the eye of my own conscience, and to the eye of God. So, the cleansed sinner, purified and made white by the blood of the propitiation, smiles upon God, is reconciled to God, is brought home to God, is accepted and received of God ; God and the sinner are at peace, in holy concord, in loving embrace, in pure and perfect reciprocated joy, over the propitiatory, and by the sprinkled blood of the great and transcendent oblation. Our sins disappear far as the east is from the west, as if they never had been committed ; we are safe and happy in the light of the Divine countenance, as if we possessed the innocence of angels and the virtue and holiness of the seraphim. Oh ! herein is love, in surpassing and incomparable evidence and manifestation ; “ Not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”

Consider, as a further end and purpose of the propitiation, "that we might live through him." Hear the doctrine of the propitiation and your souls shall live. "He that believeth on me," Christ says, "though he were dead, yet shall he live:" believing in Christ, receiving the atonement, we pass from death unto life; we go over from the condemned to the justified condition; from the community of the lost to the fellowship of the saved; from the world destined to perdition to the great asylum of the Church; to the arms and the bosom of the Lord Jesus, to the full and final glorification which is promised to all believers; so, we may say, with Paul, "the life I now live in the flesh is by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me;" and in this epistle the apostle John affirms, "he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life."

We are dead to sin and the world, and our life is hid with Christ in God; and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with Him in glory. We are alive now by faith in Christ; beloved, now are we the sons of God; we shall never die, he that keepeth Christ's sayings shall never see death. We shall live with Him evermore,

## IN THE WORK

because He liveth we shall  
living One, we are the living  
children of the resurrection,  
intelligence, all purity, all  
all eternity.

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lence in unlimited and be  
when we reflect upon our feeble  
condition ; the dignity and nobility  
came to save us, the only being  
this was to be accomplished  
agony, and suffering, and death  
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alive, justified by faith in  
that there is no condemnation  
prospect of life and glory a  
roll of everlasting ages ; we  
ably exclaim,

“ O for this love let  
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Oh ! verily, God is love ;  
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we might have eternal life t

III. Love is of God,—all love is of God ; God is the fontal source of love ; God is the original, and abstract, and essential love in all its plentitude. All love, wherever found, and in exercise, is a stream or streamlet derived from this fulness. Instinctive love in creatures inferior to man is of God. The love of the parent bird to its young—the love of bird to bird—there is faithfulness, affection, and purity in them, which might shame the faithlessness, cruelty, and hard-heartedness which we sometimes see to be in men. The love of the lamb to the dam, and the dam to the lamb ; the mother goat to the kid, and the kid to the parent goat ; the love of the swan to the cygnet, and the cygnet to the swan ; the love of the fawn to the deer, and the deer to the fawn—is of God ; in all these, and innumerable other creatures, is love by a divine influence ; the finger of God is revealed, the heart of Deity pulsates and is felt. Natural love is of God,—the love of the mother to her babe or her grown-up child ; the love of the wife to the husband, and the husband to the wife ; the love of children to parents, and parents to children, is of divine inspiration. We are so taught of God in our very nature, by our constitutional faculties, to love one another ; it is matter of express commandment, husbands, love your wives ; children, obey your parents ; and so, love circulates in all the



members of our respective families. Love is of God: the love of friendship is reciprocal recognition of the qualities attractive, lovely, and agreeable: as Jonathan to David, of Jonathan to David at parting; how beautiful and tender was David when Jonathan died: the love of Shelley, and Shelley to Byron, in that they spent together on the Leman Lake, that God, of whose intelligence and love we are so far, the image, illustration, a mutual love was of God, whom we have blasphemed. Moral love is of God: the law of love: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself;" this law was by its sentence we are condemned, quickened and awakened to a new life, we receive Christ and His salvation, the law of the law is fulfilled in us, who were in flesh, but after the Spirit.

Spiritual love is of God, in grace, in complacency, when we bless, adore, and praise Deity; in the infinite excellencies of His character. There is the love of God to us all; the love of Christ, who was for our offences and raised again for our

love of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter; this love is kindled, created, kept alive—is made to burn and glow of God. God hath given us the spirit of love—love to one another is of God. This is Christ's special commandment: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples; when ye love one another." "See that ye love one another with a pure heart, fervently." Let brotherly love continue to be without dissimulation. When this affection is warm, genial, glowing, tender, it is of God. Oh! let the spirit of love breathe upon us—how happy we are in love. It is heaven upon earth when we have some faint resemblance of the seraphim—the bright, burning ones, whose intense affection is like the flames of fire upon the altar; whose love and adoration are constant, unsuspended, and eternal. Awake, O north wind, blow, O south, that our love may be in intense and blissful exercise and manifestation. Angelic love is of God; the love of angels to one another; the delight and joy in each other's excellencies and capacities and attributes; the love of seraph to seraph, cherub to cherub; the love of the redeemed one to another, when they behold each others' faces, in reciprocal and reciprocated perfection; the love of the redeemed to angels, and of angels to the redeemed; the love of those who had fallen, but are restored, to those who never fell; the love of those

## IN THE WORK

who never fell, to the restor  
and all to each; divine love  
tender, deep, permanent, sup  
and glory among them all;  
the great magnet to which ev  
pointing, trembles no more,  
satisfaction and joy. Oh! l  
this—God in love, presiding  
His own universe in love,  
flecting love, smiling in l  
“The Lord thy God in the r  
he will save, he will rejoice  
will rest in his love, he v  
singing.” Such is the de  
God in the midst of His own  
His own image; reciprocate  
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to Him, are all things, espec  
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*is of God.*

### IV. Only by love can v

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not knoweth not God.” “I  
light and hateth his brother  
now. He that loveth his bro  
and there is none occasion o  
he that hateth his brother is

in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness has blinded his eyes." Our Saviour taught us to love even our enemies, that we may be children of our Father in heaven, for, "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and the good; and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. Be ye therefore perfect in the matter of universal benevolence, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Till we have overcome and annihilated all the malevolent passions we have no right ideas of God; we are not in sympathy with God,—not perfect as He is perfect, nor is He comprehensible by us in Himself, or His government, or His dispensations. So Christ prayed on the cross, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Till we have forgiven as He forgave, and have prayed as He prayed, we do not understand Him, but then we do. Knowledge is not the eye of the soul in this matter; love is the eye of the soul; knowledge is light upon that eye; intellect is not the eye of the soul,—malevolence, disordered affections, the mere absence and negation of love, are as a film upon the eye. The reason why you cannot know God without love is apparent, you want the faculty of apprehension, or the faculty is in a mutilated and impaired state. The dam without instinctive affection, if this can be imagined, does not know the dam that has it in all

## IN THE WORK

its tenderness : the creature the caterpillar or the worm creature in its higher form, the elephant. A mother does not understand a man and overflows. Science man base and instrument of action can be knowledge ; in like and instrument of acquiring. The utterly selfish and isolated is to have one soul in two people he that loveth not cannot without love to God and man who is love ; the quality of and passion must be in your degree understand and apply and its infinite expansiveness capacity be in you it may damaged condition. " If the whole body is full of light, thine whole body is full of single in purity, benevolence in malice, hatred and sin ; no sympathy, no fellowship God, but on the contrary hostile and adverse to Deity pathy, concord with God,

keeps time, beats, and is in unison with the heart of the God who is love, and who is the life and strength, the power and glory, of the universe. Further, only to love will God reveal Himself; if we are alienated from God by sin and animosity, not only is the eye blind, but God hides Himself: He shews mercy to thousands of them that love Him. He shews Himself to them, and only to them, that love Him. Moses said, "I beseech thee, shew me thy glory." Moses was a lover of God. To Moses God opened His glory and excellence in such forms as is possible for humanity to receive and sustain. From the wicked He hides Himself; the convolutions of the great flower and fragrance of the universe are covered up and concealed: God is not seen, not known, not understood, does not appear, is not revealed, therefore, "he that loveth not knoweth not God;" he wants the faculty of knowledge, and God draws a veil upon His own glory. The Scriptures have a veil upon them, and a veil is upon the darkened and malignant heart. On the other hand, from the heart that loves the veil is taken away, the great objects and purposes of the Bible are revealed, and, "we all with unveiled face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." If, therefore, you are without the knowledge of God, see

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the cause and reason ;  
God, and only in the love  
shine. If you would know  
ledge is to be obtained.  
heart, by the Holy Spirit  
as the sweet breath of  
garden which the Lord  
and perfume which was  
by the high priest. Love  
love is the fulfilling of the  
nor ear heard, neither has  
man, the things that God  
that love him." Let love  
and it is a revelation ;  
you become a spiritual being,  
ing, and you know all things  
comfort, happiness, and  
the greatest and most glorious  
and love the God of universal  
benevolence.

V. When we love God  
born of Him.

Love respects God  
and our delight and joy  
respects one another ; let  
in deed : it respects the  
of the man, " Love thine

long, and is kind, envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own." When we love we know God, even in His parental discipline. We may suffer pain, loss, disquietude, tribulation, which on the part of God may seem contrary to love, but, "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," and "our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding even an eternal weight of glory." In love we see it, feel it, and are satisfied; wise, deep, holy love is the ruling principle of all divine dispensations,—even in His judicial character and capacity; even in the condemnation of Satan and the final punishment of the wicked. The judge upon the bench, when he condemns the prisoner, need not be defective and deficient in benevolence; there may be the full flow of pity and compassion towards the criminal whom he must condemn; but especially is there benevolence towards the harmless and innocent part of the community. Justice to the criminal is mercy and benevolence to all the rest; and rightly viewed, this office of a judge, even as sustained by men, is benevolent to the criminals themselves in arresting them in their crimes, so that they have power to sin in such forms no more; benevolence to society in upholding the honour of the laws and the high interests of security, and order, and peace. All



## IN THE WO

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God, even towards Satan  
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pression of crime, and t  
the community, are the c  
is benevolence the root :  
which is divine, and the  
God. " He that hath ears  
that hath eyes to see let h  
understand that there are  
and solemn duties for be  
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is the capacity in its per  
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like love shall know more  
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is the seeing eye, with no  
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festations, " He that love  
Father, and I will love hi  
to him." It is love in G  
man ; it is love recognis

rejoicing in the uncreated ; the uncreated rejoicing in the created love. But on the part of God it is manifestation and discovery, so the discovery and manifestation of God to angels, and cherubim, and seraphim, is in love. In love the eyes are enlightened. Love is the great evidence of regeneration : “ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” “ Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God : and everyone that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God.” Each is the evidence and accompaniment of the other, so, as we love God and love one another we know God, are begotten of God, and bear His image. God dwells in us, and we dwell in God. When the Spirit of love abides and reigns in us, we see the goodness of God everywhere in the created universe,—the benevolence of God in the government and dispensations of His providence,—the love of God in the person of His Son. “ God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shineth into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.” This is knowledge which flesh and blood does not reveal, but our Father which is in heaven. Above all, we see and know God in the *grace* of His salvation. He sprinkles us with the

## IN THE WORK

blood of the atonement ; He  
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culties and mysteries of pr  
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pure, spotless, perfect love.  
all objects will be seen the  
love ; on all beings, love ;  
Greek, Hebrew, Latin, but :  
heaven and the immortals, t  
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everlastingly and in full chor  
without number blessed voice

in large letters of fire and glory, upon all objects in the universe, "God is love." He that loveth knoweth God.

In conclusion, beloved, let us love God. Christ said to the Jews, "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you." Let Him have to say the reverse of you and me, I know you, that the love of God is lighted up in your heart like fire on the altar, never to go out, and is become the master passion of our mind and nature. How affecting is that expression of St. Paul, "lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God;" the fading garland, the showy costume, the exciting dance, the pampered appetite, the noise of the viol, the sparkling wine, midnight dissipation, and foolish or wicked revelry, more than God, who is the first, fair, the chief good, the infinite excellence, whom all heaven worships and the whole universe adores. O the baseness to trample God, and His Word, and His ordinances, and His overtures of mercy, His presence, and His heaven, under-foot for that which is mean and vile, worthless and contemptible; they who choose the world in preference to God, know not what they choose,—apples of Sodom, grapes of Gomorrah,—beautiful to the sight, agreeable to the smell, pleasant to handle for a season, but ashes and bitterness in the end and at last. O God, may we be lovers of Thee, and only of

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pleasures which are pure  
from Thy fulness, and a  
more.

“ Yes, we will love  
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To Thine adore

2nd. Let us love one :  
a quarrel against any, let  
for Christ's sake hath fo  
as Christ also hath love  
us.” “ Behold how good  
together in unity ; it is  
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manded a blessing, even l  
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say as Paul did, “ The n  
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this is happiness ; this is  
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of, and complacency in each other's virtues, as reflecting the image and resemblance of the Lord Jesus, and covered all over with the infinite fairness and the everlasting joy of the supreme love, which is "God over all, blessed for ever." "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."

## THE FULNESS OF THE GOSPEL BLESSING.



“ And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come  
in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.”

ROMANS XV, 29.

THE apostle Paul might well write thus: he was authorized so to do. Had he not been converted by miracle? Had he not seen the face of the Lord Jesus? Had he not been caught up into paradise, and seen and heard unutterable things? Had he not been taught in some marvellous, mysterious manner by the Lord Jesus in glory? “I have received of the Lord,” in some unknown form, by some celestial communication, “what I have delivered unto you.” Was he not full of the Holy Ghost? Were not his natural capacities of a high order? Was not his piety sincere? Did not the fire of love burn in his soul towards Christ? Had he not ineffable gentleness, tenderness, and sensibility, in relation to man,

and the salvation of the souls of sinners? Well might he say, "When I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." I am sure of it, I cannot entertain a doubt of it, I see it in open and perspicuous manifestation, I see it as an effulgent object in a transparent medium. "I am sure." Yet what had he to do before he came? And when he came, how did he come? He was at Corinth; he had to go through Achaia and part of Macedonia; he had to pass by the shores of Lesser Asia; he had to be tossed upon the beautiful billows of the Mediterranean sea; he had to visit Jerusalem; and all this on the other side, journeying, not towards Rome, but away from it. But in due season he was to come. And how did he come? In power, in greatness, in majesty and human might? Did he come and enter the imperial city in adornment and decoration, and welcomed by public pomp? He came as the shipwrecked mariner, a convict, against whom certain misdemeanours and crimes were alleged; he came after hair-breadth escapes and jeopardies; but he came; and it leads us to say, "God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, and his ways are not as our ways;" "he has chosen the weak things of the world to confound things that are mighty, and things that are base, and things that are despised, and things that are not, to bring to nought things that are." He



## THE GOSPEL

did come, and though i represented, he came "i of the gospel of Christ." of Christ's religion in a who teaches the truth th the principles that Pau in the humblest mann emptiedness, to be instr minds of men, turning tl of the just, and leading salvation, may in all hu sure that I shall come u blessing of the gospel things in the text: her gospel of Christ; here is and the plenitude and these four fountains sha crystal and pleasant wa to the edification and ref

Here is the gospel. V anything that beclouds agitates the conscience, mistrust, alarm, whateve It is essential to the gos thought and principle c be something gladsome, to the freedom, the expa

if I may so say, the melody of the heart and mind. I bring, brethren, the gospel; I declare unto you the gospel, which ye receive, and wherein ye stand, and by which ye are to be saved; unless ye have believed in vain. What are the main features and elements of it?

It publishes forgiveness of sin, indemnity for all past offence; all trespasses are forgiven in virtue of the blood of the Great Sacrifice, which has been offered for the expiation of human sin. Is it not glad tidings of great joy to a debtor, that all his debts are cancelled; to a leper, that his leprosy is instantaneously cured? We publish forgiveness of all sin, the removal of all debts, the purifying virtue of the blood of the Great Atonement; and we hold that to be gospel. We are washed by it, we are cleansed and purified by it, so as to be whiter than snow, and we come out again into the condition of the innocent, we are to be treated as the innocent, and shone upon as if we were angels.

Another element of the gospel is gratuitous justification by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He "became sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Non-imputation of offences on the one hand, and absolute imputation of the virtue, and innocence, and purity of the Lord Jesus on the other; so that as He takes

## THE GOSPEL

away our sin and expiates  
He gives to us His virtue  
obedience ; call it what you  
reckoned to our account, tra  
so that we are covered with  
with His holiness and lov  
apostle intends when he  
beloved,”—“complete in Ch  
in virtue of what He has b  
bestows. All the blessings  
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and be saved.” “As Mos  
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soever believeth in him sh  
everlasting life.” “He tha  
the testimony of Christ, “  
life, and shall not come into  
known to you, that through  
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thou shalt confess with thy r  
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the dead, thou shalt be save

The gospel of adoption into the divine family, access to the divine footstool, entrance into the holiest of all. We may come by the blood of Jesus, presenting our request, and having fellowship with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. We may come as a child, with all simplicity, reverence, humility, and love, to the mercy-seat, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in time of need ; and “justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” The peace of the smile of the loving Father, from His elevation and glory in heaven, may be realized in our hearts and minds ; “and if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ Jesus ;” coming out and up into the illumination, and liberty, and happiness of God’s children, by God’s grace and mercy, and not through any merits and virtues of our own. This is gospel.

The gospel of the future life ; life and immortality being brought to light by it. “Free from sin, we become servants of God, having our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.” “The wages of sin is death ; the gift of God is eternal life.” I look at my nature, and I look at the nature of other men ; I see flesh and blood, and I behold forms of humiliation and defilement ; and I ask, is it possible that these creatures round about me—that I myself, a creature of the same substance, in the same condition,

## THE GOSPEL

should ever be seraphic, and holiness, and liberty, and to God in the vision of faith the vastness and loveliness. And the gospel pronounces it not probable, but absolutely shall be—did I say seraphic this; we are to become a transcendent model of all that and all beauty; and through and His precious blood, a passion, we shall deeply and eternally. That is gospel, good news, or an angel from heaven, I him be cursed." I curse not. I only say and feel as though if anything be preached, to tradition to the primary, essence of the gospel of Christ, that unhappy in himself, as a defender of untruthfulness heaven may well be supposed.

Well, this is a glimpse of a barren idea, a limited and of what the gospel is. I intimate to you what I represented by any one,

services, the sacrifices and intercession, the incense, the besprinkling of blood, the wearing of vestures, and all that belonged to the old law, would save the priest or the people, irrespective of knowledge of the Holy Ghost and moral renovation, and something that was vital, and living, and divine ; I think that is not truth, and is not gospel. If any one would represent that baptism, and the Lord's Supper, and the reading of the Bible, keeping certain days, attending to the outward and visible forms of Christianity, is sufficient, and will secure salvation without the Spirit teaching the understanding, and enlightening it, teaching the conscience, and purifying it, without personal faith in Christ, and individual reception of Christ, and love to Him ; I think this is false, and pernicious, and destructive. And if any one should teach that human virtue alone and by itself, with any excellencies to which man may arrive by his own capacities and powers, can render him safe and happy, irrespectively of the blood of propitiation, irrespectively of the efficacy of the grace of God, I think he builds on a wrong foundation, and that the entire superstructure will fall in ruin. Build upon the true foundation, the perfect work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Upon this foundation raise the superstructure of character, and moral excellence, and good works, and there will be salvation. But it

## THE GOSPEL

is not gospel, it is not Lord Jesus, if it be not secured without faith in principles of His Word. I insist much and at large upon the punishment of sinners and the terrors of hell, which they have rejected and despised, "weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth," if any one had, as his duty, explained and interpreted the natural constitution, the excellence and wisdom of its jurisprudence and greatness, its internal influence and ascendancy over the nations of the world ; if, on this topic, should take you to the study of criminal law, explain the things that belonged to it, and show it an absurdity past expression, there are convicts ; there, to be assured of this. I speak of convicts, and penalties, of criminal law ; I am to preach by means of which He has brought the happiness of His people out of darkness into daylight, and

message, "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." God is love, infinite benignity, infinite purity, infinite blessedness, all in one; and I am to take a vast and wide range in the vision of truth and divine glory, and to expatiate at large in the freedom and happiness of the wide and beautiful universe of God. This is gospel.

II. The gospel of Christ: a separate and distinct thought and principle. Not the gospel of Adam. We owe Adam but little. God placed him in the paradise, poured around him all the means and elements of enjoyment, and opened to him Himself. There was communion between the new-formed innocent being and God who made him. One commandment was laid upon him; that he broke. By his transgression, sorrow, calamity, desolation, have come upon us and upon our world; so that, as I have said, we owe him but little. But by the grace, wisdom, and mercy of God, there is a plan of mercy that supervenes, and another head and representative of our race is established, and to be set up, respecting whom it is said of Adam, "He was the figure of him that was to come;" and "If by the disobedience of one the many were made sinners, much more by the obedience of one shall the many be made righteous." The one offence of the one man brought death and ruin; much more



shall the life of sinless purity, in which active virtue and excellence in every form were developed in such beauty and splendour, as that angels looked down with admiration, and cherubim did adore as they beheld—much more shall the life and sacrificial death of Christ bring to us life, liberty, and salvation. “That as sin hath reigned unto death, so grace may reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” “As in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive.” Not the gospel of Adam, but the gospel of Christ. So we find in the book of the Revelation another, and a nobler and a wider, a vaster, a more beautiful and blessed paradise opened and made known to us, where there is the presence of the Glorious and Divine Bridegroom; and the glorified, spotless, sainted Church, not having stain nor wrinkle nor any such thing, shall walk with Him and He with her in unity, concord, love, reciprocated and mutual blessedness, through ages that have no end. It is the gospel of Christ counteracting and neutralizing the calamities and desolations brought on us by Adam.

Not, I may say further, the gospel of Noah. Noah was peace and comfort; this is the very meaning of his name. A covenant there was which God made with Noah: “Summer and winter, seed time and harvest, shall not cease;” and the bow of mercy

was stretched across the cloud as the sign and token of it. But do we stop there? Have we no further revelation of mercy and blessedness than in the things of nature, in the daylight, and the sunshine, and the revolution of the seasons? I go on to Ezekiel, and I read of One all bright from His loins upwards, and from His loins downwards, even as fire; and round about Him and His throne was the appearance of a bow, as in a day of rain: Christ beaming and shining upon the mental eye. I have seen the rainbow sweetly encircling the waters of the cascade as they fall; I have seen the rainbow upon the mist of the mountains, glistening softly there; I have seen the rainbow over a stately, costly, most magnificent edifice, in all forms full of beauty and splendour, and it brought to recollection that wonderful description of Christ in the Revelation of St. John: "One to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne like unto an emerald." Not Noah, not Ezekiel, not nature; but Christ, with a rainbow about His head. The rainbow surrounding Him is the emblem of His mercy; the throne on which He is seated is the throne of His grace. It is the gospel of Christ that teaches us how we may approach that throne with acceptance, obtain an interest in that mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Christ's

## THE GOSPEL

gospel is the gospel we preach to you, and desire its blessing.

Nor the gospel of Abraham preached unto Abraham, and rejoiced in the prospect of the new world; but His was the beam; ours in the meridian of softness, and deliciousness, and a brighter light, and may possess a more extended empire. Not the gospel by Adam

Nor by Moses. There is no law, there is evangelical truth, no ordinances of the law: but by the Spirit, nothing perfect; the bride calls. We are made perfect by the conscience, and in every thing happiness and salvation, not come to the mount of Sinai, that burned with fire, nor to the wilderness, and tempest, and thunder, the voice of words;” but by the Mediator of the new covenant, the sprinkling, that speaketh of the blood of Abel. It is the

I may add, not the gospel

though we read the Psalms with deep and profound interest, and in manifold forms have advantage and edification. Not the gospel as it is found in the prophets. The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah we regard as a prediction of the great perspicuity and clearness, but not equal to the records of the Four Gospels, and the interpretation subsequently given in the Epistles. "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you : searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." Not the predictions in the prophets, but the fulfilment and accomplishment recorded by the evangelists and apostles. This is our gospel, the gospel of Christ.

Finally, not the gospel of John the Baptist. Yet very wonderful are the words which proceeded from his mouth : "Behold the Lamb of God ;" "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom ;" "I will rejoice in the bridegroom's joy." Distinct and emphatic was the testimony to Christ : "I knew him not, but he that sent me said, Upon whom thou shalt see the spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." Of John, Christ said, "A greater than he

## THE GOSPEL

is not born of women ; but the kingdom of heaven is given as the morning star, however heralding in that which is to come itself ; but it is the Sun which shines upon our souls with the light of the gospel of Christ, who is God. We preach the unchangeable His incarnation, His immortality, His nature, the miracles He has wrought, the truth which He delivers, the and victorious resurrection, that He is upon the throne of judicial functions to be come to judge the world. We preach the gospel of the Father, the blessed God, the gospel of the dispensation of the Spirit, the graven in stone, which bears witness to but the dispensation in which we are now developed, the powers and the fire, the light and the life, everywhere in all the Christian economy : it is eminently the gospel of the Father and the Omega, the Beginning and the Last.

It is the last dispensation. "Last of all, he sent unto them his Son." "He hath spoken unto us by his Son." Prophecy and vision are sealed up. There will be no other revelation until the trumpet of the last day shall sound. All that we look for is the full opening and manifestation to the minds of men of the contents of the inspired oracles. Great is our responsibility; high is our privilege. Prophets and kings have desired to see and hear what we see and hear, and died and did not see and did not hear. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for them that love him." But the things are opened, and divulged, and made clear and luminous to us by the Spirit. I say, great is our privilege, and high is our responsibility, and fearful will be our disaster, if we make not right use of the advantages by which we are encompassed—a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which will consume the adversaries; but triumphant and most blissful will the result be, if we are found among them who do not draw back into perdition, but who do persistingly believe unto the saving of the soul—the saving of the soul, the great end, the ultimate result of the gospel; the flower, not in its roots, not in its stem, but in its *bloom*, and beauty, and efflorescence. May the

gospel of Christ bring this day to your soul and mine, the light, the liberty, the holiness, the resemblance to the Lord Jesus, which makes fit for the open vision of His face hereafter, and in which all blessing will be consummated. The blessing of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost rest upon you. All that so far I have been able to touch upon is the gospel, and the gospel of the Christ, the Great Being from whom it emanates, and in the manifestation of whom it chiefly consists.

### III. The blessing of the gospel of Christ.

The Bible is full of blessing: there is the blessing pronounced on Adam and our first mother; we read that, "God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth;" and His blessing was vast, and deep, and universal; and God blessed the sabbath day in order to their distinctive and sacred enjoyment of their privileges and His works. This blessing was renewed and repeated to Noah and his sons; God blessed them, and said, "The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air," and "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter,

and day and night shall not cease." There is the blessing of Melchizedek : Melchizedek king of Salem came to meet Abram, and without contradiction the less is blessed of the better, and he "brought forth bread and wine : and he was the priest of the most high God. And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all." There is nothing in the whole range and circle of pagan literature comparable in interest and beauty to this meeting of the ancient and venerable king, pouring out his benediction upon the distinguished and illustrious patriarch. There is the blessing of Isaac : Isaac said unto his son, "Come near now, and kiss me, my son. And he came near, and kissed him : and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed." It is the smell of the early fragrance and exhalations of a field in the oriental morning, and the figure is eminently sweet and beautiful. Esau came afterwards, and said to his father, "Hast thou but one blessing, my father ? bless me, even me also, O my father. And Esau lifted up his voice and wept." Man can bless only as he is permitted of God. God Himself can bless boundlessly, and without limita-



## THE GOS.

tion. God blessed Jacob  
thy seed shall all the far  
And, behold, I am with  
all places whither thou  
thee, until I have done  
thee of." Very remarkable  
by Jacob upon Joseph, 'even a fruitful bough by  
over the wall . . . The  
prevailed above the blessing  
the utmost bound of the  
be on the head of Joseph  
head of him that was  
There is the blessing of  
whole congregation and  
people, after the sprinkling  
burning of the incense  
arrayed in the glorious  
saying unto them, "Thou  
thee: The Lord make thee  
and be gracious unto thee  
countenance upon thee,  
is the blessing of Moses  
he blessed the children  
separate benediction is  
and the fulness of blessing  
tively, at the close, when

dwell in safety alone : the fountain of Jacob shall be upon a land of corn and wine ; also his heavens shall drop down dew. Happy art thou, O Israel : who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency ! and thine enemies shall be found liars unto thee ; and thou shalt tread upon their high places." But the time would fail me to enumerate further. Our God is a God of blessing : our religion is a religion of blessing ; all the malediction and sorrow and woe of the world exists independently of the Bible, and is here as matter of fact. The Bible brings the elements of renovation, the ground and glorious principles of counteraction and cure. The Bible is as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion ; through the Scriptures, and by the Bible, the Lord commands the blessing, even life for evermore.

But we are to speak of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. At the beginning of His ministry how He opens His mouth with blessing. Grace was poured into His lips when He opened the book of the prophet Esaias, and found the place where it was written, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor ; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of

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sight to the blind, to  
bruised, to preach to  
Lord." As He began  
through the whole co  
ministry in blessing.  
its opening paragra  
variety of blessing: "  
"Blessed are they th  
meek." "Blessed are  
thirst after righteousn  
ful" "Blessed are the  
the peacemakers." "P  
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when men shall rev  
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the streams from the  
crystal and abundan  
thirsty may drink the  
over, by Him the eyes  
lame man did leap as  
dumb did sing; His p  
and benediction; little  
He took them in His  
to come to me." He v  
wherever the light sh  
died in blessing; He  
able words, "It is finis

enemies, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." When He went away it was in blessing the apostles; how beautiful is the account, "He lifted up his hands and blessed them, and was parted from them, and a cloud received him out of their sight." This is He who said, "Bless and curse not." He was the source and fountain of all blessing at that time; He is so at this day, and will be so evermore.

" Blessings abound where'er He reigns;  
The prisoner leaps to lose his chains;  
The weary find eternal rest,  
And all the sons of want are blest."

The blessing of Christ comes upon the individual mind and nature, producing peace, purity, and repose, liberty, holiness, and joy; it secures a perpetual and increasing illumination, so that we pass from light to light, from honour to honour, from happiness to happiness, from love to love, from holiness to holiness, from bliss to bliss, in endless progression and development. The blessing of the gospel of Christ is ever fresh and ever new; how blessing has clustered upon blessing,—a harvest of blessing, vintages of blessing; blessings in the house of God, blessing in past ages, blessing profusely poured forth now at the present time, blessings which are promised in the future. Oh! fresh, full, plentiful, overflowing, is t e

## THE GOSPEL

benediction,—fresh as the  
the summer fruits, rich an  
ingatherings. The blessing  
the greatest of all blessing  
to a family and house, to  
to the world, with all its  
merciful unto us, and bless  
shine upon us. That thy  
earth, thy saving health  
the people praise thee, O  
praise thee. O let the na  
joy ; for thou shalt judge  
govern the nations upon ea  
thee, O God ; let all the  
shall the earth yield her in  
own God, shall bless us. O  
the ends of the earth shall  
of the gospel of Christ is  
fills up all the requirement  
the soul says it is enough  
of Malachi the prophet i  
signification, “ I will pour  
there shall not be room en  
beyond all that we could h  
that receives it may say, I  
blessed with all spiritual bl  
in Christ Jesus ; it adds :

blessings there is more or less of care, or fear, or anxiety, or uncertainty as to the protracted possession. The blessing of the gospel of Christ is pure, perfect, and unalloyed ; it is like light, which is the emblem of it ; it is like God, from whom it descends, in all its resplendence and purity ; it is deep and silent, and efficacious ; it comes not with observation and outward show ; it is not to be found in markets, and in the streets, and in the thoroughfares of great cities,—it comes down into the understanding, and enters into the heart ; it is like dew upon the lily, like showers upon the mown grass ; and so it is written, “I will be as the dew unto Israel : he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree. . . . They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine : the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.” It sometimes comes unsought and not asked for ; and so it is said by David, “Thou preventest,” that is, thou goest before him with the blessings of goodness : and again is it written, “I was found of them that sought me not ; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me.” It always and invariably when sought for is obtained ; “Ask, and ye shall receive, seek, and ye shall find.” “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children : how much more

## THE GOSPEL BLE

shall your heavenly Father g  
[which includes and comprehen  
them that ask him." It is co  
often in the house of God ; in  
mised, "where I record my na  
thee, and I will bless thee." (Ezekiel says, "I will make t  
round about my hill a blessing ;  
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showers of blessing." It flows  
diately from God Himself, who  
water upon him that is thirsty,  
dry ground : I will pour my s  
and my blessing upon thine off  
nent and imperishable ; not li  
vanities of this passing and pe  
blessing which surpasses and  
form of benediction ; it is bless  
on the happy possessor of it  
satisfaction, from happiness to  
length he shall find himself,  
coronation, crowned with a spark  
diadem. Oh ! it is a great and ma  
the apostle or the minister of C  
that I shall come to you in the fi  
of the gospel of Christ.

IV. We have spoken of the

of Christ,—the blessing of that gospel ; now for the fulness of that blessing.

There is the fulness and expansion of the heavens, when by day all is clear and ample, vast and refulgent in the glorious firmament ; by night, not when clouds, and interventions, and obstructions conceal the glory, so that here an orb is shining, and there another by itself, but when the whole concave, in its magnitude, magnificence, and riches is uncovered and disclosed ; so is the gospel seen with intervening mists, and shadows, and partial obscuration, or seen in all its amplitude, and power, and glory. O that God “would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man ; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith ; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height ; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” This is emphatically the plenitude of the benediction.

There is the fulness of the ocean ; great and boundless is the deep when it rises in majesty and power,—when it swells in the immensity of its tide ; how it heaves in the bursting of its billows, as it approaches the shore, and prevails against all opposition. The



## THE GOSPEL B

gospel of Christ is deeper than the tide, and more powerful than the flood, who by searching can find out its wonders? who can find the no metaphor sufficiently represent the glory of the gospel of Christ.

There is the fulness of a river; it overfloweth all its banks; the flood was only for the Jews; the overflow was only occasional; constant and perpetual; but the gospel it may truly be affirmed

“ Rivers of love and life  
In a rich ocean join  
Salvation in abundance  
Like floods of milk

1st. There is the fulness of

When the gospel is unveiled; when the gospel is preached; when salvation is clearly declared; when the efficacy, in the removal of all sin, and the tears, and prayers, in this matter are justly represented; when justification by Christ's blood, and not by human works, is expounded; when men are instructed to rely on Christ alone, and not to place

vessel and one on the firm rock, but both feet upon the indestructible rock for safety and salvation; when the infinite all-sufficiency of the one great atonement is opened and revealed, and the proclamation is made, "Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely." When it is seen that there is no exhaustion, no diminution by all past bestowments; that there has been enough for the past generations; that there is enough now for all the wants of the world; that there will be enough for all the ages to come hereafter. It is the fulness of manifestation; it is free, like the light, open like the mountain breeze, plentiful and precious as the streams of the four rivers which flowed originally from the paradise which God Himself planted.

2nd. There is the fulness of divine power and grace.

"My speech and my preaching," Paul says, "were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in the power of God. Our gospel came to you, not in word only, but in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance;" it did not come in restraint, in parsimony, with reluctance, and small supplies, but it came in plentiful and powerful communication. Drop down, ye heavens, from above, let the skies pour down righteousness, let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation.

## THE GOSPEL

“ Thus will He pour  
And we shall rend  
We the dear people  
And He our God

On the day of Pentecost, “  
heaven as of a rushing might  
the house where they were  
peared unto them cloven  
it sat upon each of them;  
with the Holy Ghost, and  
tongues, as the Spirit gave  
was the fulness of the  
Christ, and Paul was certain  
Rome in the manifestation of

3rd. There is the fulness

The blessing brings the as  
the clearness of light and  
assurance of faith, firm, and  
belief of the facts and prin  
assurance of hope, of person  
and in eternity, of all the bl  
and revealed, the undoubted  
of joy, and the rivers of plea  
for evermore. We may be,  
with favour, and full of th  
may be full, like Gideon's  
dews of heaven fell so larg

wrung out. So may there be the fulness of personal enjoyment, as great and perfect happiness as our nature can contain.

4th, and finally. The fulness of reciprocal gladness and satisfaction.

Paul said, "I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established; that is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." What solace! how they helped, and cheered, and assisted in replenishing each other. I have drunk of the water of life and tell you; you drink in like manner and tell me; this is done by tens, and hundreds, and thousands, and when all are filled together, the blessedness is not to be described; we eat our bread with joy and singleness of heart, in the light of God's countenance and favour, though the eyes of others may not be able to discern the sources of our joy. So it was with the Jews on the day of Pentecost; mocking, they said, "These men are full of new wine." Unbelievers cannot see the happiness and glory of our religion; they see only the ram skins, and the badger skins, and the cloudy pillar, light and darkness enfolding each other. Believers who receive the gospel, and come into the Church, see the inner splendour, behold the face of God and the adoring cherubim, and the golden mercy-seat, and

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heaven itself were ope  
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did predestinate, the  
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blessing of the Holy  
the truth and the do  
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blessings for eternity,  
blessings for the wor  
and embraced in the  
gospel of Christ. Bl  
your blessing will ov  
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sion of light and know  
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We infer from the v

1st. Glorious is th  
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stand in the temple and shew unto the people all the words of this life; to complete the climax, we are even said to be ambassadors of God.

2nd. Enemies to themselves are those who do not attend divine ordinances. The ordinances and instructions themselves are open and indiscriminate to all mankind, as the sunshine or the pure breeze upon the mountain or upon the sea. The fountains of salvation flow—the many will not come that they may wash and be clean, that they may drink and live. The great banquet is prepared and spread, but one says, “I have bought a yoke of oxen and cannot come,” and another, “I have bought a field and cannot come,” and a third, “I have married a wife and cannot come.” Oh self-excluded, self-infatuated, self-bewildered, self-ruined! the time will come when it will be said of those who were invited, and refused the invitation, “None of those men shall taste of my supper.”

3rd. It is a solemn thing to come and hear, and hear only, not to believe, not to appropriate, not to apply the truth, not to live, and grow, and flourish under its influence, to be like those who heard John the Baptist, who was a burning and shining lamp; “and men were willing for a time [on the rendering of Calvin] to amuse themselves in his light,” as if the head of a family were to light a lamp for his

## THE GOSPEL :

servants by night, that they which he had enjoined on to do so, employed it in wickedness. It is awful to it, "nothing more than one and can play skilfully on words pass away without po

4th. Happy are they who who hear and believe. God bless her provision, I will say I will also clothe her priests saints shall shout aloud for presage and preparation for of the upper sanctuary, and glorified, and in the unbought summate knowledge, and wholeness, and joy, and love, o

## THE DAY OF DEATH BETTER THAN THE DAY OF BIRTH.



“A good name is better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.”

ECCLESIASTES VII, 1.

It may not be improper at the conclusion of one year and the commencement of another, to inquire if we have a good character, a spotless name, a blameless reputation; if we have, this arises out of good principles and a right condition of the heart and mind toward God; if there be internal and external rectitude and holiness, it is the effect of regenerating grace, in which case the good name on earth is answered, reciprocated, reflected, and repeated by the good name in heaven, then we may say as Christ did to the apostles, “Rejoice not that the spirits are subject to you, not in any worldly privileges or advantages, but that your names are found in the registers of the celestial kingdom.” We read also



## THE DAY OF I

in Scripture of those whos  
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the world ; if it be so, ver  
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and character should be swe  
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aromatics of the East were  
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for the anointing of the p  
the sanctuary. "The Lon  
ing, Take thou unto thee  
myrrh five hundred sheke  
half so much, even two h  
and of sweet calamus two  
and of cassia five hundred  
the sanctuary, and of oil  
shalt make it an oil of ho  
compound after the art of  
be an holy anointing oil  
unto Moses, Take unto the  
onycha, and galbanum ; th  
frankincense : of each shal  
. . . thou shalt beat some  
of it before the testimon  
And as for the perfume v  
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position thereof ; it shall

the Lord." So the persons and the places were replenished with the odour of the precious spices. Solomon also in the Canticles asks, "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?" Of the Church of Christ it is said in mystical and figurative language, "Thy plants are an orchard of pomegranates, with pleasant fruits; camphire, with spikenard, spikenard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices." The Queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem, with a very great train, with camels that bare spices which were deemed as precious as the gold and costly stones and other presents, with which the spices were accompanied. In the New Testament we read, that Mary the sister of Lazarus, brought a box of ointment of spikenard, very rare and of great value, and poured it on the feet of Jesus; so that the house was filled with the odour and fragrantcy. Christ vindicated the act and said, "She hath performed a good deed in the prospect of my burial." The nostrils were constructed of God to inhale the perfume of the flowers of the field, as well as the eye to delight in the beauty of their colours, and the perfection of their forms. So are there various ointments and odours which are all

good, and precious, and  
 a good reputation founde  
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 better ; there are persons  
 whose thoughts, and w  
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 truth and goodness as  
 garden, when the dew o  
 of the skies is replenish  
 sweetness. This is what  
 rulers, and magistrates,  
 should be. He that rule  
 ruling in the fear of Go  
 of the morning when the  
 without clouds, as the te  
 the earth by clear shining  
 of nature, the aromatics o  
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 knowledge and wisdom,  
 happiness, is much better  
 fragrant ointment and e  
 one as the image and f  
 several times in Scripture  
 we read, " Because of  
 ointments thy name is

therefore do the virgins love thee ;" it is the Church enraptured by the moral beauty, the perfect and transcendent holiness, the copious and invaluable instructions of the Lord Jesus. Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart. "Let thy garments be always white and thy head lack no ointment;" maintain purity of heart and life, and the consolation and joy of the Holy Ghost will be abundant and overflowing. "The smell of thine ointments is better than all spices." The luxurious and self-indulgent Jews did lie upon beds of ivory, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and chant to the sound of the viol, and drink wine in bowls, and anoint themselves with the chief ointment. Hezekiah showed to the Babylonish ambassador his ointments and spices, as well as his other treasures ; and the women brought ointments and spices to anoint the body of Christ, on the morning of the resurrection. In the second epistle to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul expresses himself in this remarkable language, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place ; for we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish : to the one we are the savour of death unto death ; and to the other the savour of life unto life." So that the name and doctrine of

## THAN :

Christ, as minister  
successors, is an od  
world.

But the transitio  
and unexpected—"a  
of one's birth."

Then you must d  
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Queen of Sheba a  
Where is Solomon a  
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of Sheba died, Mary  
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the day of death tha  
is wonderful inform  
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than to be born, tha

is the best thing that can possibly happen to us. Let us try to make this truth and doctrine apparent.

I. The day of our birth is good.

Our Lord indeed said of Judas Iscariot, "It had been good for that man if he had never been born," but this arose from the vices of his own mind, his selfishness, covetousness, pride, and malignity; it arose from the fact that he permitted Satan to enter into him, and to sway his plans, and purposes, and resolutions; it arose from the fact that he perpetrated the greatest crime it was possible for a man to commit—he betrayed the Holy One of God—he received money for the capture and condemnation of an innocent and guiltless being, a being of divine and transcendent excellence and perfection. Certainly, clearly, better never to have been born than to be a captive of the devil, and to be guilty of crimes execrable to all generations. But we are now speaking of men of virtue and goodness, men of blameless reputation, men of excellent character, whose names are like the aromatics of the East, and like ointment poured forth, and we say that the day of the birth of such men is good, and full of divine benediction. Job, indeed, opened his mouth and cursed his day. "And Job spake and said, let the day perish on which I was born. Let that day be darkness; let

## THAN THE

not God regard it from  
shine upon it. Let dark  
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come, and that God wou  
more than his beginning, '  
sheep, and six thousand c  
oxen, and a thousand she  
and three daughters . .  
no women found so fair  
After this lived Job an  
saw his sons, and his s  
tions." Surely it was  
and he was bewildered  
mind when he cursed b  
know that his example &  
illustration of the prin  
ment, and the manner  
providence are explaine  
wards, and so to be of  
edification of the Churc  
end of the world. Bles  
was born. Beware of .

darkness, dreariness, and desolation, that you curse not your day.

“Beware of desperate steps, the darkest day  
Live till to-morrow, will have passed away.”

It was good that you were born, though something incomparably better is in reservation for you, in the higher and brighter life of heaven and eternity—for the day of death is better than the day of one's birth.

The day of one's birth is good in various views of it. It is good to your kindred, to your mother who bare you. “A woman has sorrow when her hour is come, but she remembereth no more her anguish when it is said, a living child is born into the world.” The joy of a mother over her new-born babe is like the joy of the apostles when they saw Christ after His resurrection. The joy of the apostles, when they saw Christ after His resurrection, is like the joy of a mother over her new-born babe; there are no purer, deeper joys in the world than these two—they mutually illustrate each other. It was a good day when John the Baptist was born; there appeared an angel of the Lord to Zacharias, standing on the right side of the altar of incense, and the angel said to him, “Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear a son, and thou shalt call his name John, and thou shalt have joy and gladness,



## THAN THE

and many shall rejoice at  
great rejoicing at his birth  
circumcision ; the mouth  
opened immediately, and  
spoke, and praised God,  
Holy Ghost, and prophesied  
Lord God of Israel, for he  
his people, and hath raised  
for us in the house of him  
was great satisfaction in the  
of John, so often, and always  
in the house when it is

What manner of child is  
surely good, for all your  
friends and relations, throughout  
world ; the birthday is good  
the dying day is better.

you were born ; your education,  
it is given you to live  
capacities, are wonderful  
your mind, your will, your  
your power of acquiring knowledge  
store of all manner of pleasures  
is great privilege and high  
had never seen a man before  
before, and you happened  
the first time, as upon a

beautiful, and unrivalled bird of surpassing plumage and sweetest song, you would say of that man, "What a being! how noble! how majestic! how divine!" You would say of that woman, "A creature of entrancing sweetness!" You would be overcome of admiration, astonishment, delight, and joy. If any object, any visible being were to be worshipped, worship your own nature, there is nothing like it in the material creation. Did not God say, "Let us make man in our own image . . . So God created man in his own image, male and female created he them, and blessed them, and said, Have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." There is ineffable dignity, and value, and importance; there is, or may be, what is Godlike, in the human nature and person, so that surely it is good, and a great benediction, to be born, still, while the birthday is good, according to the text, the dying day is better.

If the day of your birth is good to your kindred, and good also to yourself, it is good also to society. Surely you were born to be a blessing, surely you have been a blessing; as God said to Abraham, "Blessing I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing." Surely somebody is the better for you; surely you have done good according to yoursphere, and station, and capacity;

## THAN THE I

you have discharged duties  
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If good to your kindred  
society, it is also good to  
creature, into His creation  
into His family. God too.  
“This creature have I form

shall shew forth My praise." He formed you for beauty, and ornament, and usefulness in His kingdom. "This child," God has said, "is My child;" to the earthly father and mother He said, "Take it, nurse it, bring it up for me, teach it as the first thing to say, looking up to Me, and folding its little hands together, 'Our Father, which art in heaven.'" So you were taught to pray, and so you prayed; the child is good to the Heavenly and Divine Parent. It may be replied, "Alas! I was born in sin, and shapen in iniquity." Yes, but there is the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; by Christ Jesus you may be washed so as to be clean and purified, so as to be whiter than snow. "Alas! I was as the prodigal, I gathered all together, and went into a far country." Ah! did you ever so depart from God? did you ever say, after that, "I will arise and go to my Father, and I will say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son?" Then the Father fell upon your neck and kissed you, and said, "This my son was dead, and is alive again, was lost, and is found." Then you are a child still, and the day of your birth is a day of benediction. If there be grace and goodness in you of any kind, and any form; if there be repentance, faith, regeneration; if there be regard to Christ and His salvation; if

## THAN THE

you have taken His yoke  
burden, which is light ;  
kind ; if not legal goodness  
there be evangelical goodness  
heart and a contrite spirit  
born, good to God, whose  
Again, is it not good to  
into this fair and beautiful  
born in a dungeon or a cold  
deep cavern of the earth,  
and said, " Follow me," and  
out, to the sight of the sun  
and brightness of this day  
stellations of heaven, to the  
night, by the revelations  
immense discoveries of truth  
overcome and overwhelmed  
glory of the objects and to  
much for you. The universe  
revolve for you. Here is  
time and harvest, cold  
Here are flocks and herds  
the summer rose, and the  
sweet scent of innumerable  
are the riches of the sun  
autumn, the harvest and  
and service of man. He

the human voice—how lovely! how instructive! how animating! Here we are, all of us, with the ability to do good to one another, and to contribute to the general happiness and the universal joy. You must be a cynic, or bewildered and ascetical, you must be a misanthropist or a madman, if, amid all the profusion and variety of divine goodness, thou sayest, “It is not good to be born.” Is it not good to be under the shadow of the wing of God, to be cared for by His providence, and watched over by His love? “The Lord is thy keeper; he is thy shade upon thy right hand.” He is your Shepherd; He spreads your table, and supplies all your wants. “Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow, they toil not, neither do they spin: and yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” Is it not good to be fed, and clothed, and supplied, and comforted, in all our daily and nightly necessities and wants, by the hand of Divine Beneficence? Oh! it is good to be born! Is it not good to live here in this land of freedom, and these times of discovery? Commerce lays open all the world to us, and brings its produce from all its quarters, from its hills, and valleys, and rivers,

## THAN THE

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be born. Once more, he  
revelations, here is Chris  
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justification, acceptance  
to us by faith in His I  
the Lord's Day, the day  
the resurrection of Chris  
work. Here are solemn  
here are great congrega  
hymns, and spiritual s  
priest and the Divine Co  
my rest for ever : here w  
it," and His presence a  
accordingly. I say with  
of Transfiguration, whe  
shine as the sun, and

glistering, "It is good to be here." I say it is good to be born ; I call for an anthem ; I demand a hallelujah. With one heart and one voice we will bless and praise God. "We bless thee, O God, for our creation, preservation, and all the blessings of this life, but most of all for the redemption of the world by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

It is good to be a babe, happy, healthy, warm, embosomed in its mother's arms, lifting up its face in laughter and frolic, full of life, spirits, and joy. It is good to be a boy,—a boy, light of heart, light of step, jocund, bounding, making experiment of his varied powers. It is good to be a girl, softer, quieter, more tender, more delicate, more loving, but not less innocent, mirthful, and happy withal.

It is good to be a man,—to be a man in those mornings of health, when one arises, fresh, strong, and vigorous ; when life overflows ; when ebullitions of the spirits are copious and abounding ; when the sun shines and the atmosphere exhilarates ; when wit flashes and genius sparkles, and the mind partakes of the power and reinvigoration of the body. It is good to be in manhood or womanhood, in the midst of the various duties and responsibilities, occupations, and employments, which dignify and adorn existence. It is good to be in age ; good to be in longevity ; good to be old and well stricken in years ;



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innocence, harmlessness, and beneficence, spreading as much happiness as we can in the whole circle of our family friends and connexions. The birthday is good ; it is good to be born.

II. The day of our death is better.

This is no absurdity, no extravagance, no paradox to strike with surprise and make men stare ; this is a sober, quiet, calm, philosophical certainty ; enlightened reason, true science will affirm this. Above all, divine revelation, the authority of the Holy Ghost, renders it incontestable. But the day of death, is it not the day of mourning, and lamentation, and loss ; the day of trial, and separation, and tears ? We admit this, but there are great and overpowering reasons which counterbalance all these in the opposite scale. Have we not heard of the cold perspiration, the agony, the convulsions, the fearful phenomena of dying ? Yes, we have heard far too much of this,—too much to be consonant with reason, or fortitude and manliness of mind ; or philosophy ; or very often, except in some extreme cases, with fact ; or usefulness, except to alarm : or with Scripture and the authority of God. To die is to experience the third birth ; natural birth is the first, spiritual birth is the second, death is the third ; death is the throe of the highest, and last, and best nativity. Christ has abolished death in any other sense than this,

## THAN TH

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gospel.

Do we not adopt a  
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ferred. Well, but aft  
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“There the wicked ce  
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The small and great  
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Ecclesiastes, “ So I r  
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was power ; but they  
I praised the dead wh  
the living which are y  
gate of the rich man :

was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." All this you admit, but you must admit more ; you must admit that to die under any circumstances,—under any conceivable accumulation of this world's prosperity and happiness, is better than the birthday, when it pleases God to call us. You must admit in such a case as that of the Princess Charlotte, who was so suddenly called to depart from the highest pinnacle of this world's elevation, though, by this fact, a nation was smitten with sorrow and covered with mourning ; you must admit that to her the day of her death was better than her birthday. The same thing is true, in an eminent degree, of the good Prince Albert. We exaggerate nothing, neither would we extenuate, but take the doctrine and principle of the text as it here lies, and the reasons are the following :—

1st. In the day of death we enter into a better world ; truly we have not seen it—we do not know exactly what it is ; but neither did we see this life ; neither did we understand it ; neither had we any apprehension of what it is till we came here ; it was less probable that, having no existence, being in a state of nihility we should come alive into this world, than that, being here, our life should be prolonged in another and a better world. This world is variously contrasted with that world in Scripture. This is

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which we are to be conformed ; we are to shine in Him, and reflect His likeness. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with Him in glory. We know not what we shall be ; but we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. It was good to come here in the image and nature of Adam ; it is better to go there in the spotless image and the holy nature of the Lord Jesus. The truth of the text is demonstrated.

3rd. We shall have better company.

Here we are more or less intermingled with the wicked : we may endeavour to get the best companions we can. The apostles, when set free, are said to have gone to their own company ; and we read in the prophet Malachi, that they who feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard them, and kept His book of remembrance, and numbered them with His jewels. We keep away from the wicked as much as possible ; we desire to have no fellowship with them, for what fellowship hath light with darkness, or he that believeth with an infidel. Yet we must go out of the world, the apostle Paul says, to be quite free from the annoyance and vexation ; then we will go cheerfully whenever it shall please God to call us. But how sweet often is the company of the wise and good, when knowledge, and wisdom, and virtue, flow down

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of care and conflict, and vexation and strife, and irritabilities, so that a man says sometimes, "Oh that I were a bird," "Oh that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away and be at rest." No—better not be a bird, better not have wings, better be a man or a woman, a being with reason and speech; better not flee, abide where you are, and glorify God by patience and submission, by industry and diligence, by punctuality, economy, and prudence. But think how all the implements of labour and service will be laid aside, the needle, the loom, the spade, the scythe, the hammer, and all the rest of them, laid aside for ever. What is to be done in heaven? Oh! in our poor language, according to the images in which only we can speak of it, there will be perpetual adoration and everlasting praise; the multitude clothed in white raiment before the throne of God, each one carrying the palm-branch of victory, are represented as singing "Salvation unto our God, and unto the Lamb for ever." Knowledge will be perfect; love a flame of fire; worship perpetual; unknown, unknowable active services performed in consummate holiness and unbounded joy. Oh! it was good to come here, yes verily, Thou Great Benefactor, Thou who art the Supreme Benevolence; but better, far better to go there where the great river of the water of life flows; where



the tree of life grows, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yieldeth her fruit every month, the very leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Better be in a world where there is "no more curse, and God's servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads; and there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever." "Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them" into the world of perfection, glory, and blessedness.

5th. A better sanctuary, and better services.

Here we enter the House of God, and say, "how amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts." But in that world the apostle John saw no temple, the Lord God Almighty Himself was the light and the temple thereof. Here we search and examine the instructions of the Bible; all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and we read with diligence and prayer; but there we shall enjoy unbounded knowledge without difficulty, and by the clearest intuitions. Here we sing psalms unto God, and forsake not the assembling of ourselves together; but what is this to the multitudes which no man

can number, and whose voices are like the noise of mighty thunders and many waters. Here we worship in tabernacles made with hands; but there Christ is on the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord pitched and not man.

6th. Lastly, better to see Christ.

It is good to hear of Him. Job said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes;" but then we shall say, mine eye seeth Thee, and I delight myself in myself as the image and *fac simile* of Thy holiness.

"On earth, we want the sight  
Of our Redeemer's face;  
Yet, Lord, our inmost thoughts delight,  
To dwell upon Thy grace.

And when we taste Thy love,  
Our joys divinely grow;  
Unspeakable, like those above,  
And heaven begins below."

Now all this is the briefest, most imperfect and superficial view of the case, yet we affirm that when all the promises of Scripture are fulfilled, and all the blessings of the future life realized and enjoyed, it will be abundantly proved that better is the day of death than

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the day of one's birth  
the vine is planted in  
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the clusters of the grapes  
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would you be reduced

more, and go along the line of your life a second time, when you might step out of time into eternity and be a seraph among seraphim, an angel among angels, one of the just and perfect and spotless ones, an immortal in the midst of assembled immortals. O God, never let me be a babe, an infant again; but let me be a heavenly and glorified creature in the next transition; this will be better for myself, better for my companions, better for Thy universe, better, O God, to Thee. Thy creature restored from all its imperfections, Thy child brought home in the fondness, tenderness, and intensity of reciprocal love for ever. The day of death is better than the day of birth.

Several important inferences are deducible from the foregoing statements. First. The doctrine is true of Christ, and is applicable to Christ. The day of His birth was good. The angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth, goodwill to men." They said to the shepherds, "There is born to you in Bethlehem, a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." The day of His baptism was good, when the heavens were opened, and the Father's voice said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I well pleased." The day of His transfiguration was good, when Moses and Elias appeared in glory, and spake of the decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem. The day

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power of death, thou  
who, through fear  
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His resurrection,  
glory in the heaven

Secondly. It is  
who receive Christ  
true of the covenant  
forth abundantly,  
laid up in store for  
merry. But God is  
required of thee;  
which thou hast

Sadducee or infidel, clothed in fine linen and scarlet, and faring sumptuously every day; who receives in this world only his good things, and of whom Christ says, "Lazarus is now comforted, but thou art tormented." It is not true of false professors; they shall come from the east and the west, and the north and the south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of God, whilst some who called themselves the children of God, are cast into outer darkness. It is not true of the faithless and unprofitable servant, who did smite his fellow-servants, and did eat and drink with the drunken; unexpectedly the stroke of death may fall upon him, and his portion be assigned to him with unbelievers. Wherefore be ye also ready, for at such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh. Stand with your loins girt and your lamps burning, and in readiness for the coming of the Lord; then the text in you shall be verified. It is therefore true to the full extent only of those who do receive Christ and believe in Him; To as many as received Him to them gave He privilege to become the children of God, even to them that believe on His name. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so is the Son of Man lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. "I am the resurrection and the life; he

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Thirdly. Be r

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Fourthly. De  
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shall we do with you after your death." Socrates, smiling, said, "As you please, provided I am still with you." Then addressing his friends, he said, "I cannot persuade Crito that he who has been holding this high discourse with you is the true Socrates; he imagines that Socrates, and the corpse you will soon see, are the same thing, and asks how he shall inter *me*. All I have said to prove that as soon as the poison has operated, I shall be no longer here, but be transported to join my illustrious ancestors, appears to him as mere invention to comfort you under my death. Be so kind, my friends, as not to say at my funeral, 'Socrates is in his coffin, they carry Socrates away, they lay Socrates in the grave;' such observations are not only contrary to truth, but offensive to the departed spirit; bury my body as you think proper, but be comforted to think of the happy region to which I have gone." So spake Socrates, though a heathen; but David expresses a higher satisfaction: "Although my house be not so with God, he hath made with me an everlasting covenant of the future life and the final glory." Simeon said, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Peter calmly said, "Shortly I must put off my tabernacle, as the Lord Jesus Christ has shewed me." Paul writes to Timothy, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have



kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." Oh ! it is possible, it is proper, it is matter of philosophy, matter of godliness, to contemplate, with solemn satisfaction, with holy and divine joy, our departure from the world. "I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." The dying daily did not interfere with the deepest peace and the highest exultation.

Fifthly. Do not unduly lament those who are gone before us to the heavenly world. Perhaps they are taken away from the evil to come ; sorrow not as those who have no hope ; you have every hope for yourself and the departed ; they are not dead, they are living, like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom Christ speaks ; they all live to God, in repose, holiness, and love, which are ineffable and divine.

Sixthly. Do not blame God for permitting death. Others went away in their time to make room for you ; you go away in your time to make room for those who shall come after you ; but see that you leave the world the better for those that come after you, as those who went before you left you the better for their doings ; other men laboured, and you have entered into their labours. This is a system, not of fixed and permanent communities, but a system of successive races and generations ; go, go whenever

you are called, from your place and position here, to your place and position there—the first is good, though transient, the second is far better, and everlasting. Better is the last day of the year than the first ; far better is it to put off the harness than to put it on ; better is the end of the world than the beginning of it. At the beginning the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted aloud for joy ; but we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein perfect righteousness shall universally and for ever dwell and reign. Inexpressibly better are the last chapters of the book of Revelation than the first chapters of the book of Genesis. Let us pass out of the old year into the new one, with these cheerful and encouraging views of the divine economy and dispensations respecting us, and the race to which we belong.

Finally, let us adore God in the exercise of His bounty and benevolence. He gave you this life with all its functions and capacities ; you did not buy it—you did nothing towards it. He will give you the next, with all its honour and happiness ; you shall not buy it—you have no sufficient price to pay. “The gift,” mark that, as specially and gratefully to be observed, “the gift of God is eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” How vast and large, how immense and mighty, are the divine arrangements ! in wisdom

and power, and benevolence, does God conduct them all; whilst we are left to exclaim, in wonder and astonishment, in love and joy, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

THE END.







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